

MIDLANDS

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ZONE

THE ESSENTIAL
NIGHTLIFE +
CLUBBING
GUIDE

READERS'
AWARDS 2015
**TOP FIVE
REVEALED!**

VOTE FOR YOUR
FAVOURITE BARS AND
CLUBS NOW!

INSIDE

**ALL ABOUT
THAT BASS**
INTERVIEW WITH
MEGHAN TRAINOR

**JODIE
PRENGER**
TALKS
CALAMITY JANE

**BIRMINGHAM
PRIDE
GRANTS**
THOUSANDS OF
POUNDS AWARDED
TO LGBT
COMMUNITY GROUPS

CRAZY
Cupid
LOVE

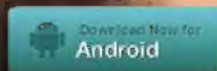
GIFT
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THERE'S LOVE IN THE AIR THIS VALENTINE'S DAY

ISSN 1462-7035



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GLASGOW 1ST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

10:30PM - 3AM THE ARCHES, 30 MIDLAND ST, G2 8DL

LONDON WEDNESDAYS & SATURDAYS

SATURDAYS 10PM - 6AM WEDNESDAYS 9PM - 3AM

PULSE, NO.1 INVICTA PLAZA, SOUTH BANK, SE1 9UF

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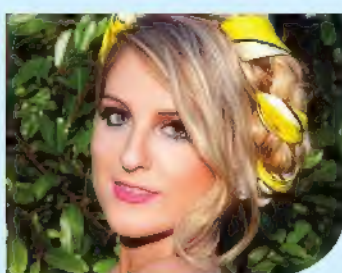
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The Editor's Note

Ryan Humphreys @ryanhumphreys

And just like that, the first month of the year has been and gone. So now may I present the February edition of Midlands Zone!

We've got another great issue for you this month, starting off with an interview with the amazing Meghan Trainor, of All About That Bass fame. We also talk to Jodie Prenger about her role in Calamity Jane and her big gay following.

And there's so much more besides...

It's time to vote!



Incredibly it's that time of year again when we ask you, our loyal readers, to decide who's worthy of a Midlands Zone Readers' Award.

Last month we asked you for your nominations and you voted in your thousands. So we've collated all the data and are this month presenting the top five in each category. Voting is now open, right through until Friday 27 February. There's a lot of hard work and dedication that goes into the Midlands' gay scene. From the bars and clubs themselves, to the DJs, bar staff, security and more. They all work their socks off to ensure you have a great night out, week after week and month after month. Of course, it's not just the gay scene we set out to recognise - there are all the charities, community and social groups too. If we could give everyone an award, we would. But we can't - and that's why we need your help. So get voting! We'll be announcing the details of where and when the awards will take place in the March issue...

Pride gives back...

Last month saw representatives of Birmingham Pride host a special awards ceremony for community groups and charities that will be benefiting from the staggering amount of money raised at the event in 2013.

Over £45,000 has been awarded so far, and there's a lot more to come later this year. It's brilliant to see Birmingham Pride finally able to help out the LGBT community across the Midlands. From sports projects and support groups to the arts and beyond, Pride is helping out people in need. There's even more money to

be given away, and we'll be telling you more about that in the near future, so stay tuned!



An LGBT-only school?

In what I thought was an early April Fools Day prank, I came across news of an 'LGBT-only school' which may soon be opening in Manchester. My first thought was, 'why?' The idea behind it is to offer a safe haven to those students who face bullying, intimidation and harassment in school. But surely taking these students out of mainstream schools will be a sign of failure? Shouldn't we instead be teaching not only every pupil but the schools themselves that it's not about segregation, but integration. Over the decades people have fought hard for equality. This seems like a really backward step. I'd be keen to hear your thoughts.

Cucumber's here!



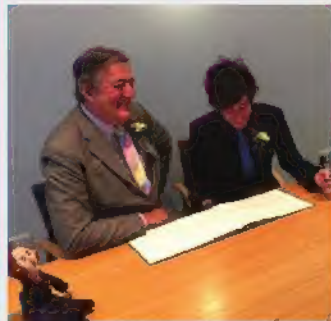
They're here! After months of waiting, speculation and frenzy, Russell T Davies' new gay dramas Cucumber and Banana - and their online counterpart, Tofu - have finally arrived on our technicoloured goggle-boxes!

The series seem to be quite a refreshing change from Davies' earlier gay show, *Queer As Folk*, which to me felt like an over-the-top and rather stereotyped look at gay life. Don't get me wrong, I loved *Queer As Folk*, but Cucumber and Banana just seem to have a greater sense of reality about them, with believable characters and a funny yet interesting storyline. I can't wait to see how the three series unfold over the course of the next couple of months.

Ryan x

What's Hot!

Congrats Stephen Fry!



No sooner had Stephen Fry confirmed he was engaged to his partner, Elliot Spencer, than the pair had actually tied the knot. Stephen said he wanted a private affair, and that's what they got!

I'm pregnant. I'm not the father.



The joy of the internet is that you get to see the huge number of creative ways in which people choose to announce things. This couple came up with some amazing personalised t-shirts that convey their message with humour. Why didn't we think of that first?!

What's Not!

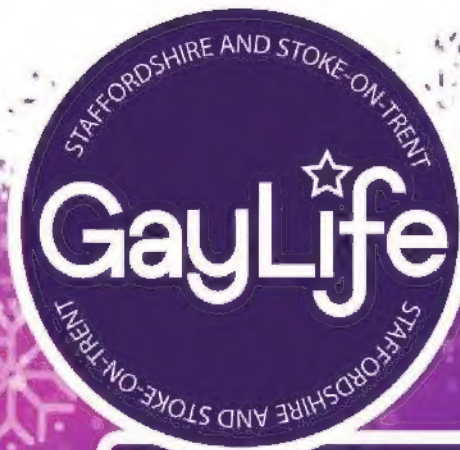
Perez Hilton in CBB



This year's series of *Celebrity Big Brother* features a truly bizarre bunch of 'celebs'. Our least favourite has got to be Perez Hilton - he's every bit as vile as the gossip he spreads online. We're rooting for Michelle Visage to win anyway!

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Celts Narborough Road Sauna Clinic:

Date: Every Tuesday

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: Celts Narborough Road Sauna, 38 Narborough Road, Leicester, LE3 0BQ

City Celts Sauna Clinic:

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 3pm - 5pm

Place: City Celts Sauna, 33 New Bond Street, Leicester, LE1 4RQ

Splash Spa & Leisure Clinic:

Date: Every Thursday

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: Splash Spa & Leisure, 61 Bedford Street South, Leicester, LE1 3JR



Mykee Mackenzie

DJ & Graphic Designer
Missing, Birmingham

Born: Birmingham

Star sign: Taurus

Age: 33

Each month we take a look at someone from the Midlands LGBT community. This month our focus turns on Mykee Mackenzie, a DJ at Birmingham's popular Missing Bar and a part-time graphic designer.

About Mykee

Where did you grow up?

Northfield, South Birmingham.

Single or attached?

That would be telling!

What makes you happy?

Walks in the rain, cuddles, honesty and great food. The way to my heart is definitely great food!

What makes you sad?

I love a good blaring session in front of a sappy or sad film. They get me every time, especially if I'm sat on my own on the sofa with the pooches. I cry at happy, heart-felt stories or sad films. I'm such a sappy sod at times!

What makes you angry?

Homophobia. Life isn't about labels. People should be free to live the lifestyle they wish, without discrimination, without being judged for their sexuality or gender status.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

I can be a right stubborn cow at times. I guess it's just a typical Taurean trait. It's the one quality I hate about myself. I just can't give in; I always have to be right. Always!

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

A few years ago at Benidorm Pride, I got rather drunk one night and ended up being desperate for the toilet at about 4am while walking home. Instead of finding

the nearest loo, I decided to wee in the bin on the street, as I thought no one was around. Not attractive, I know, but when you have to go, you have to go! Much to my humiliation, my friends were stood there watching, literally taking the piss!

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

I believe that same-sex couples should have access to the same benefits enjoyed by heterosexual married couples, so I think it's great that we can now share this privilege and get to show this commitment to our partners. One day I'd like to get married and have an intimate little wedding. Nothing too 'over the top'; just close friends and family - and, of course, my perfect man and a big party!

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

I knew from an early age I was different; from as early as I can remember. I knew I didn't like the opposite sex but I couldn't quite put my finger on it. It took me a few years to figure out how different I was. Since then I've never looked back or questioned it. It was harder when I was younger, as society wasn't as accepting of homosexuality as it is today, but that didn't stop me from believing that life isn't about labels and accepting my own sexuality.

When did you come out?

I didn't come out, I fell out! Well, joking aside, I first came on the scene on my 18th birthday, after I'd left a straight club with my les-

bian friend, who I that night told I was gay. She brought me down to the scene and I've been on it ever since. Not long after, I started work at Missing Bar as a barman - when I was a wee little chicken - and have worked there on and off ever since. I didn't officially come out to my mum until I was 29, even though I was a regular on the scene from an early age. I remember her ironing my bright-coloured Missing uniform for me from the age of 18, though. She must've thought it was a brand of T-shirt or something!

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

I got bullied at school for being different. Whether it was for being a little camp or a little short I'm not sure, but I was on the end of some abuse, mainly in my first year at senior school. It was quite traumatic, especially getting pinned down, burned with cigarettes and tormented. Life is a learning curve, though, and it's all made me stronger as a person. No looking back!

Who was the first person you told you were gay, and what was their reaction?

A friend from work. She ended up telling me she was gay too. She brought me down to the gay scene on my 18th birthday.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

I think it's good to realise that you're making a brave choice about coming to terms with your sexuality. I think as an individual you will be much happier in the long run than if you try to hide it, which can often lead to a stressful life. Things have changed a lot

since I was faced with making decisions about telling people. There are organisations and support networks in place nowadays to help you every step of the way. Be brave and true to yourself!

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

I've only had the one experience. Let's just say I lost my fingers. I didn't find it a very pleasurable experience, to be honest, and the episode just ended up with a few sticky digits! I've never looked at a box of fish fingers in the same way!

Your Career

When you were younger, what did you want to be?

I used to love watching Rolf's cartoon club and loved the animations they used to make, so I always wanted to be a cartoon animator. This then diverged into graphic design!

What was your first job after leaving school?

I started working for McDonalds at the age of 16, and progressed to management at an early age. Growing up I was a very shy and quiet lad. The job gave me the confidence to speak up for myself and brought me out of my shell!

You're a DJ at Missing Bar.

How did you first get into DJing?

Many years ago, when Paul and Glamour had Glamorous Showbar, I once helped out when they were stuck and enjoyed it. I progressed from there, gaining regular slots and learning from the other DJs and friends. That's got to be over 10 years ago.

What's the most challenging aspect of being a DJ?

Apart from keeping the crowd going and dancing, I'd have to say dealing with drunk people trying to make requests and spilling drinks all over you. Often I can't even make sense of what they're trying to say and just have to nod and smile politely!

What tracks do you find fill a dancefloor and get a good reaction?

Everybody still goes mad for Beyonce. However, I do find a bit of classic Rihanna still gets them going. And you can't beat a bit of uptown funk.

What DJ gigs have been the most memorable?

On my first night at Missing Bar, I was very nervous and apprehensive about my first DJ gig there. In order to calm my nerves, I decided to have a few drinks. However, towards the end I was a little tiddly and played the same Steps song about three times in a row. They had me back the following week, though, so it was all good!

What do you get up to when you're not DJing?

I love nights in and the occasional nights out. I enjoy going to the cinema, eating far too much sushi and shopping. I also work as a part-time graphic designer, creating visual delights within the leisure and hospitality industry.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene and what's your earliest memory?

My earliest memory is definitely standing outside Missing on my 18th birthday, being approached by the manager, Adam Fletcher, and offered a job. I've been on the scene ever since!

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

It's got to be the up-and-coming Amy LaQueefa from The Fox. Such fun! I do love the Birmingham regulars, though, like Miss Penny and Glitter Lips!

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

I have a few too many to decide. One of them is definitely Hilli from The Fox, who's one of the most genuine people on the scene. She always goes out of her way to make you feel welcome.

What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

I love working at Missing Bar. The team are a great bunch of people who all get on and work well together. The regulars are a giggle and the venue attracts such a diverse range of people. No two shifts are the same and it's always the place to party!

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene's changed over the years?

The scene was definitely busier when I first came out on to it. The venues were thriving all weekend long. However, there were fewer bars back then, no smoking ban, and I guess people just had more money. Nowadays the scene seems a little more integrated



with the straight community's, which is fair enough, but there's still a level of homophobia in certain straight bars and places. This has got better over the years, though, and I think we're working towards a more accepting, accepted and integrated community.

How would you change the Midlands' gay scene?

In an ideal world it would be great for venues to work together more - encouraging a better sense of community - rather than all just trying to compete for the most money in the till. One day maybe!

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

Even though I work there, I love Missing Bar. I get on well with all the regulars and the team. We all work well together and have some great nights out - Monday nights are epic and I always end up messy! I love The Fox for a bit of karaoke, plus they have some great cocktails!

What do you do to relax?

I love to bake - anything from cupcakes to a nice chicken pie. Even though the process can be

quite messy, I find it quite relaxing and therapeutic - especially after a stressful day! I also love entertaining and cooking great food for loved ones! Lazy days with Netflix and the duvet are a must too - not that I get the chance that often.

What do you enjoy on telly?

I love comedy. Laughter is the best form of medicine for me, so a bit of stand-up is always a hit! I also love EastEnders and Coronation Street, Grand Designs, Come Dine With Me, The Fall and The Tomorrow People.

What was the last album or track you bought?

Being a DJ I get a lot of tracks on a weekly basis. The last album I got for my own enjoyment was Ella Henderson - Chapter One. Ella is so talented and her voice is stunning!

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

Twitter.

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

A nice relaxing holiday sat by the pool with lots of cocktails, ice-cold beer and blazing sun! I went to Cancun in October for two weeks with Patsy, my bestie, and her family. It was paradise.

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Liam Neeson.

What's your favourite book?

The Wasp Factory by Iain Banks.

Half empty or half full?

Half empty.

What's your favourite food?

Peanut butter and sliced gherkin sandwiches! Go on, try it - you'll be surprised!

And how about your favourite drink?

A nice ice-cold pint of Guinness or three bottles of wine!

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

Madonna.

Gaydar or Grindr?

Neither.

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

Audrey Hepburn.

Editor-in-Chief
Martin Monahan
martin.monahan@midlandszone.co.uk
01743 281777

Managing Director:

Paul Oliver
paul.oliver@midlandszone.co.uk
01743 281711

Editor

Ryan Humphreys
ryan@midlandszone.co.uk
01743 281722

Sales & Marketing:

Chris Horton
chris.horton@midlandszone.co.uk
01743 281704

Admin/Subscriptions:

Adrian Parker
adrian.parker@midlandszone.co.uk
01743 281714

Graphic Designers:

Lisa Wassell
Chris Atherton
Adrian Parker

Accounts Administrator

Julia Perry
julia@21stc.co.uk
01743 281717

Website Development:

Jim Pallett

Contributors:

Gudrun Limbrick
Steve Ball
Graham Bostock

Head Office:

13-14 Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6AE

Tel: 01743 281777

info@midlandszone.co.uk

What's On
MAGAZINE GROUP

THE UK'S LARGEST REGIONAL
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We endorse the recycling of our magazine and would encourage you to pass it on to others to read when you have finished with it.

WORK Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is Stonewall's top gay-friendly employer in 2015

Stonewall has published its Top 100 Employers 2015 list, showcasing Britain's best employers for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff - and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is the top gay-friendly employer.

In second place is Tower Hamlets Homes, and Lloyds Banking Group is third. On the fifteenth anniversary of the repeal of the ban on lesbian, gay and bisexual people serving in the military, all three of the armed forces appear on the list for the first time - and M15 takes seventh place.

Pride UK at American Express wins the award for Network Group of the Year. Alison Lowe, Touchstone's Chief Executive, is named Senior Champion of the Year. Jamoor Ali, Senior Commercial Analyst at BP, is Role Model of the Year. Ally of the Year is awarded to EDF Energy's Chief Nuclear Officer, Mark Gorry.

On 12 January 2000, the ban on lesbian, gay and bisexual people serving in the military was lifted. In 2015, the Army, Royal

Navy and Royal Air Force secure positions at 46, 56 and 91 respectively.

Accenture, Barclays, BP, Citi, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Herbert Smith Freehills, HSBC, IBM, RBS and the Royal Air Force are named as Top Global Employers, based on their support for their lesbian, gay and bisexual staff worldwide.

Ruth Hunt, Stonewall Chief Executive, said: 'Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and every employer featured in the 2015 Top 100 have performed remarkably. Not only was this the most competitive year to date, we're delighted to see that in just fifteen years our armed forces are making real progress in supporting and developing their lesbian, gay and bisexual staff.'

Ruth Hawkins, Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, said: 'I am absolutely delighted to lead Stonewall's Employer of the Year for 2015. The Trust has an outstanding reputation for its proactive approach to all strands of equality and



diversity. Having appeared in the Top 100 list for a number of years, it's especially rewarding to see that our continued efforts to tackle discrimination and create an inclusive workplace have been recognised.'

Full results of the Stonewall Top Employers 2015 index are available now on Stonewall's website - www.stonewall.org.uk/W/ET2015.

The Top 100 list is based on the results of Stonewall's Workplace

Equality Index 2015, the eleventh published by the charity.

The Index is based on a range of key indicators. These include a confidential questionnaire of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff, with over 9,700 participants.

This consistently revealed that employees from organisations ranked in Stonewall's Top 100 exhibited higher levels of staff satisfaction and loyalty.

CRIME Man who delivered homophobic leaflets in Stoke-on-Trent avoids criminal prosecution

A man who delivered anti-gay leaflets to dozens of homes in Stoke-on-Trent will not face criminal prosecution.

The Stoke Sentinel reports: 'Literature condemning homosexuality was shoved through a number of properties in Fenton and Longton in September last year.'

'Following the delivery of the material, which suggested being gay was "not natural", police arrested a 53-year-old suspect on King Street in Fenton.'

'But the suspect will not face any action after the Crown Prosecution Service said that while the his actions "caused offence", they did not cross the high criminal threshold for prosecution.'

EDUCATION Coventry college removes ban on LGBT websites

Henley College Coventry has removed its block on websites with LGBT content.

PinkNews.co.uk reports: 'Students discovered that they were unable to access sites such as Birmingham Pride and Birmingham LGBT Centre. This was due to a new filtering system put in place, which automatically blocked "Gay or Lesbian or Bisexual Interest" sites.'

'Marketing Manager for the college, Sandra Ciuffini, told PinkNews: "The issue that arose was due to the college updating its firewall system, and the default settings filtered out some LGBT content. It's an automated message from our web filter software and definitely not the college's wording. Henley College Coventry would never set out to offend anybody or block this content intentionally; the block was removed as soon as it was brought to our attention. Henley College is committed to ensuring fair and equal opportunities for all its students, and for many years we have supported the LGBT group in the college."



PRIDE Early-buy Birmingham Pride 2015 tickets go on sale

The countdown to Birmingham Pride 2015 is well under way, with Early Buy tickets having been released for a limited time period.

Birmingham Pride takes place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend (Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May). Tickets start at £9 per day. For full information, see page 19.



CRIME Birmingham LGBT tackles domestic violence problem with new independent advisor

Birmingham LGBT now has its own Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) to support LGBT people who're experiencing domestic violence or abuse from an intimate partner or family member.

If you're experiencing domestic violence and would like support, call Birmingham LGBT on 0121 6430821 and ask to speak to its IDVA, Anna.

Birmingham LGBT Centre



LITERATURE Nottingham's gay youth have their stories published as part of new SpeakingOUT anthology

Heartbreaking and inspiring stories of Nottingham's gay youth have been published as part of an anthology.

The Nottingham Post reports: 'More than a dozen youngsters from the city volunteered to take part in the project, discussing their experiences of coming out and the difficulties they've faced because of it.'

'Produced with Nottingham-based social enterprise Global Words, it's part of a series of works telling the experiences of marginalised communities in Nottingham.'

Youth groups NGY and Base 51 worked together on the project. The youngsters, aged between 14 and 20, took part in a six-week workshop, contributing new material every week.

'Global Words director Victoria Villaseñor said she was

stunned by the stories of hardship and rejection the writers had experienced. She added: 'It started out with them talking a lot, discussing coming out, but what it turned out to be was really intense stories of survival, of bullying, of sexual violence and self-harm. All of the kids were really brave in sharing their stories. As soon as one of them started digging deeper, the rest instantly followed.'

'Ms Villaseñor, who is also a writer of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender literature, said it had altered her experience of what it was like for today's youth to come out.'

She added: 'I would've thought it was easier before working with these kids, but it's amazing just how much bullying still happens and how much they have to deal with and go through.'

The book, SpeakingOUT, is being sold in Waterstones, Five Leaves Bookshop and online, with the profits going to annual gay pride festival Nottingham Pride.

'Among the authors is 20-year-old Amy Meakin, of Chilwell. She said: 'I did my piece about gender and gender stereotypes. I wanted to produce a piece of writing about the way that I feel, and hope that others feel the same way about it. There are a lot of myths out there, and I hope that it helps clear up some of those. I'd never written that seriously before I did English at A-level, but thought I would have a published piece of work.'

'Global Words is among the dozens of groups throughout the city that are supporting Nottingham's ongoing bid to become a UNESCO City of Literature.'

NATIONAL NEWS

EDUCATION Campaign launched to oppose plans for UK's first gay school

A campaign is being launched against plans to build the UK's first 'gay school' in Manchester.

Gay Star News reports: 'LGBT Youth North West, based in the city centre, wish to take around 40 full-time and 20 part-time LGBTI pupils and their allies. It's hoped the school will help bullied and outcast kids that need additional support. It's currently in the 'consultation' stages of the planning. But now a petition has been launched by a trans woman, Tara Hewitt, to stop the school from happening.'

Commenting on her campaign, Ms Hewitt said: 'The answer to these challenges is not to create a segregated space for LGBT people to be hidden away at the expense of the tax payer and funding taken away from other mainstream schools, but for more effort to be put into making our entire education system an inclusive and positive experience for children from all backgrounds, including those who are LGBT.'

HEALTH NHS staff banned from helping people access 'gay cure' therapy

NHS staff in England have been told that they should no longer help people access gay conversion therapy.

BBC Newsbeat reports: 'The treatment isn't offered on the NHS, but it's understood some staff have occasionally put patients in touch with organisations who provide it.'

'Fourteen organisations, including NHS England, have signed an agreement to stop gay conversion therapy being offered to patients.'

'Although in general referrals to conversion services are rare, there's evidence that GPs, counsellors and psychotherapists have made them.'

'They will also be providing training for staff to enable them to improve support available to LGB people seeking advice.'

'The agreement, The Memorandum Of Understanding On Conversion Therapy In The UK, makes it clear that NHS England, the organisation which has day-to-day responsibility for running the NHS, 'does not endorse or support conversion therapy' and will make this clear to staff.'

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THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

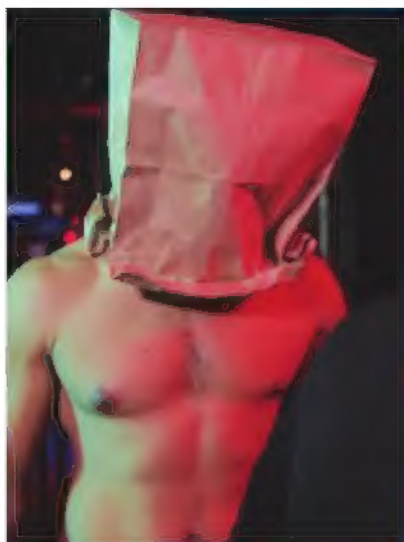
WATCH THIS! The best video we've been watching this month...



Many of us have faced coming out to our friends and family. Last month it was the turn of twin brothers Aaron and Austin Rhodes. They filmed their emotional coming-out chat to their father - and despite it not being easy for them, we love it! Check it out: youtu.be/L3K0CJ8usPU

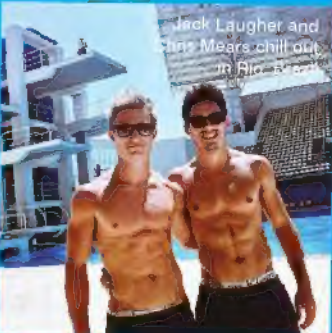
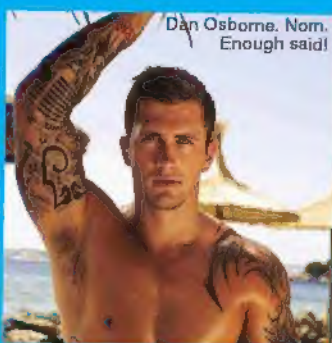
CHECK THIS OUT! If gay guys acted in real life like they do when they use dating apps!

"Hi", "Hi", "Hi", "Hey", "Sup?" - If you've used any of the gay dating apps on your smartphone, you'll have experienced this for sure. This hilarious video chronicles the most common experiences you find on apps like Grindr, Hornet or Jack'd - including the infamous headless torso! Watch it here: youtu.be/5Zk5XC8tu64



SNAP HAPPY!

Our favourite pictures from Instagram...



THE **BIGGEST** 2 DAY LGBT FESTIVAL IN THE UK!

birmingham pride

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IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT BASS! WE HAVE A CHAT WITH
MEGHAN TRAINOR

American singer-songwriter Meghan Trainor shot to fame last year when her debut single, *All About That Bass*, rocketed to the top spot in charts all over the world. Now her debut album, *Title*, has been released - and in a couple of months, she's heading to Birmingham for a show. She tells Midlands Zone about her rollercoaster ride to stardom...

You signed your record deal in February 2014. In just a single year, you've gone from being a successful but relatively unknown songwriter to being a Grammy-nominated global star. What was it like finding out you'd been nominated for two Grammys?

Epic. A person who makes music only dreams. Dreams in life are to get Grammys. And I've done that at 20 years of age: now I'm 21. To win it is a whole other game, but just to be nominated means that, for the rest of my life, I'll be introduced as 'Grammy-nominated Meghan Trainor'. That's fucking epic.

It's an incredible achievement - especially considering that, as you say, you're only 21. It's been such a whirlwind year for you. You've not only been writing for other artists but have also had one of the biggest-selling songs ever, *All About That Bass*, which is your very own song...

Yeah! All my friends are songwriters and producers and I've lived all their dreams. They all tell me that 'They're like, you accomplished what we try to do every day! As songwriters our goal is for other popular singers to sing our songs, but the real dream is to be singing the songs ourselves.'

You get to do both. Sledgehammer, which you wrote for Fifth Harmony, is getting massive too.

I wrote that with Michael Keaton's son. Isn't that mind-blowing? Sean Douglas - he's a fantastic writer. He also wrote *Gow by Dem Lovato*. He's crazy; he's great. I love Demi.

What would you say has been your highlight over the past year? I know there are probably a lot.

I just had a new one! My birthday was everything. I had an arena of 20,000 people sing Happy Birthday to me 'cause of Nick Jonas, who I'm the biggest fan of. But I also just did Jimmy Fallon. I performed on it. Jimmy came to talk to me and my parents about how he just loved my album and wants to play it. I remember I was acting so cool - but once he turned around, I was like [whispers] OH MY GOD. And my mum's like, 'that was the coolest thing in life ever, right there'.

And Michael Buble did a cover of *All About That Bass* on Instagram.

I'm obsessed with him. One of my goals in life - like, off my bucket list - is to make sure Michael Buble knows I exist. When I saw that he sang my song, I died. I saw it on Instagram. I was lying in bed, got up and was like 'Mum, did you see it?' She was like 'I saw it, I saw it!' I've been to maybe five concerts - his was one of them, and I cried. I was like 'oh he's so good on track, he's probably terrible live'. But he was better live. He's so funny.

***All About That Bass* was so big in the States and has subsequently gone global. Quite often with artists, they'll launch in their own country first, break there, and then focus on other countries. With you, it all happened at once...**

Yeah, this is my first time being here. I already have two songs that are, like, huge. Which is crazy.

***All About That Bass* has become a global hit and was number one here for four weeks.**

Did you have any inkling it was going to be so successful when you were writing it?

We did. About *That Bass* and then we shelved it. I was like 'cool song, whatever. No one's gonna hear this. No pop star can sing this 'cause they're all fucking size zero and no one can rap and sing'. So I didn't have a clue. And what you hear today is what the demo is. No auto-tune or nothing. I walked out of the studio and that's what I heard. And that's what I pays every day.

The feedback has been great. It's become an anthem for body confidence. It's just a fun, positive song...

Oh it's the jam. I didn't get why it was bumpin'. But I heard it on an Instagram video, in the background, and I was like 'oh I get it. This shit bumps like, this is the jam! I get it now'.

Have you ever been anywhere and heard it?

Yeah, it's weird. The only time that I got really weirded out was when I was home on my island and went to a sushi place. I walked in and *Lips Are Movin'* is playing. Five minutes later, Bass plays. Then *Lips* again. And I was just like 'damn I'm famous! Like, it's real'.

Do you remember where you were the first time you heard *All About That Bass* on the radio?

I was with my producer in Nashville. I was just being 'not 'cause it was the first time, but cause it sounded good! And I was like 'I thought it was gonna sound so bad on the radio, but it sounded great!'

I guess when you're so involved in a song, you must go into a bit of a bubble, as you hear it so many times. Then, if you hear it in a situation which is completely removed from that, you can almost look at it from an outsider's perspective.

Yeah, yeah. And when I perform it is when I'm like 'oh this is the jam, everybody sing and dance'. And it happens.

Your debut album, *Title*, came out recently. What's your favourite track?

It changes every day, but today it's *Bang Dem Sticks*.

You've got the duet with John Legend on there...

Yeah, and I produced that. I was very proud of myself. I was like 'I need one song on here that I've produced, because I've been a producer since 13, so give me something!' And yeah, I got a lot of crap for putting *Bang Dem Sticks* and *Sam* on there, because they're not Doo Wop, but I didn't care. I'm a songwriter and these are my favourite songs. My management manages John Legend, so I sent them the song with just my vocals on it. They played it for him without telling me, and he said he'd love to be a part of it. I was like 'oh, who? John? Sure, fine; let him have it'.

The album was also co-written and produced by Kevin Kadish, who has some amazing songs in his back-catalogue - Stacie Orrico's *Stuck*, for one...

Listen, I was his biggest fan as a songwriter, and he did Jason Mraz too. He did *Geek In The Pink* and he did *Wordplay*. So I walked in there trying to be cool and was like 'I listen. I rap'. He was like 'okay'. I was like 'and I like Doo Wop'.

He was like 'cool', and I was like 'and I'm not a size two'. And then we wrote about it and we were like 'do you like it?' He was like 'I like it, dude, I like it'. But I was such a fan. To the end of the album I kept telling him, 'I'm still star-struck by you'. It's crazy. Nobody gives him enough credit, and that's why this is a big moment for him too. I'm just so happy he's on this. It's just amazing to see his face at these number one parties. It's just like, what the hell.

Are there any songs that you listen to and think, 'damn I wish I could've written that'?

Halo by Beyoncé. What A Song. I was thinking about it this morning. Those lyrics. 'Remember those walls I built, baby, they're tumbling down'. Also *Mistletoe*, by Justin Bieber. Thought that was one of the best Christmas songs I've ever heard!

That whole Christmas album, though - I love it.

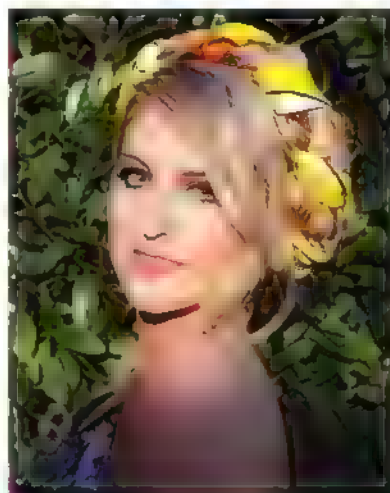
Justin's people keep coming to me and saying 'we need songs for him'. I say, put him with an acoustic guitar and stop doing this gangsta stuff. Show his vocals. He's got the fanbase of Elvis - he'll never go away - but make them respect him again. Give him those songs.

He recently featured on an acoustic track with Cody Simpson...

I loved that. The labels didn't love that. They said 'we don't want to put it out'. It was great hearing him and proving myself right. I kept saying it, and I was like 'I told you, he sounds great with a guitar'.

Finally, what does the rest of the year hold for you?

The tour in April. The Grammys! It's gonna be my year to really get people to let people start to know Meghan Trainor - who she is and what she's about. And I'm so excited. Last year was pretty epic. I think in 2015 there'll be more special performances that I haven't done yet, like Saturday Night Live and stuff.



MEGHAN TRAINOR will perform at The Institute in Birmingham on Saturday 11 April.

"I think I'm a trapped drag queen myself. Of course, growing up in Blackpool I did see quite a few drag queens. I think that's probably where it all stems from."

Jodie Prenger

on having a whip-cracking time as Calamity Jane

Jodie Prenger was catapulted to overnight fame after winning the BBC TV series *I'd Do Anything*. Her subsequent performance as Nancy in Cameron Mackintosh's West End production of *Oliver!* earned her great critical acclaim - as did her portrayal of the Lady of the Lake in Monty Python's *Spamalot* and Dolly in the tour of *One Man, Two Guvvners*.

Jodie's now back on the road as the whip-cracking Calamity Jane - a role made famous by her all-time idol - and visits the Midlands both this month and next.

Midlands Zone recently caught up with the Blackpool-born actress/singer to find out more...

How does the stage version of Calamity Jane differ from the 1953 film?

A lot of the great music is there but sadly Doris Day is not, so audiences have to put up with me. A few of Sammy Fain's songs didn't make it into the original film due to editing, but they're here in the musical and they're brilliant. There's one called *Careless With The Truth*, which everyone who sees the show thinks is such a phenomenal number. They think they remember it from the film but it never featured. There's another one with Frances Fryer, the guy who comes into town dressed as a woman. He's got a brilliant song. Everyone sings *Companions About The Weather*. And there's a serenading song about Adelaide Adams which

is just butter. I know people have seen the film but they're actually getting more for their money when they come and watch the show.

You're a big fan of Doris Day. What's it like playing a role made famous by one of your icons?

It was quite daunting stepping into her shoes because I don't just love the woman, I adore her. But it's been so lovely playing to such warm audiences. It's a really warm show, more so than any other show I've done. It's just got that magic about it. We get audiences aged from four to one hundred and four who come and sing along. It's got something that I've never experienced in a show before.

Do you share any character traits with Calamity Jane?

I googled Martha Jane, the original Calamity Jane, and yeah, I think we're very similar. Everything bar being an alcoholic and a smoker. Martha, that is. Oh, and I think they referred to her as a prostitute... She was fiery and probably spoke her mind too much.

How do the demands of playing Calamity Jane compare to previous roles?

It's tough physically and it's very full on. I think the longest time I'm off stage is about two minutes. In other shows, you get to go backstage and powder up your make-up and get ready to go back on. Not with this show.

Once the buckskins are on, they stay on. But it's great and I never get tired of it. I think that's due to the brilliant cast. I'm on stage and doing a show but I'm still able to listen to Soned play the piano and pick up the sax. Then Bobby comes along and does the weather dance which always amazes me. And then there's Tom who's just a brilliant Bill Hckok. All of these characters are just a delight to share the stage with. For me, that's what keeps it alive.

We hear that audiences get to enjoy your instrumental skills...

I play spoons, I play the ukulele and, wait for it, I have a tinkle on the ivories. In for a penny, in for a pound, that's me.

Are all of these new-found skills?

I could play the piano but I only read a little music, so it's mainly by ear. Not literally of course, that would be quite painful! The ukulele is only a few chords, in all fairness. As for the spoons, I learned to play watching YouTube, believe it or not. It's amazing. When you're working with these magical maestros, you do actually pick up quite a bit, but much of it was a learning curve for me. I love a challenge.

Do you have a pre-show routine to psyche yourself up before going on stage?

I think it's just getting out there and getting on with it. It's a lovely cast and we have a lovely vocal warm-up. Then it's just a case of pardon the pun - cracking on with it.

The road to fame was a bit of a winding one for you. When you finally arrived, was it all you'd expected it to be?

Yes, and then some. One thing that I did expect was that everybody would be snobby, but they were just so welcoming. For me performing in the West End has been like gaining another big family. I expected it to be hard work. My nan always used to say 'Get your sleeves rolled up and get stuck in', and that's what I've always done. I've always worked really hard at everything I do, and hopefully it pays off.

Was the overnight success that came with winning I'd Do Anything easy to deal with?

It shocked me. I hate the saying 'it was like a whirlwind', but it was. I have hardly any recollection of the night I won. I went into genuine shock. I hate being called famous; I just feel grateful that the show gave me the opportunity to do the things I've always dreamed of doing. I think if you keep your feet firmly planted on the floor you'll have a great time. I think there are people out there who want to be famous just for the sake of being famous, and that's so, so wrong. I enjoy just enjoying it.

Which stars had a big effect on you as an adolescent growing up in Blackpool?

It's nice to have someone who you can look up to as a kid. When I was growing up, I looked up to people like Bette Midler, Doris Day and Liza Minnelli, who I love so much. I even looked up to Danny La Rue! I mean, drag queens have a lot to answer for in my life. Oh, and then there was Vera Lynn, who I actually

met. I accosted her in a toilet and that was awful. I was a physical wreck and did a curtsy. She was like the Queen. I've met the Queen, but I was more excited about meeting Vera Lynn and Liza Minnelli.

So do you ever get star-struck working in the West End?

I always say, we all come into this world the same way and we all go out the same way, but yes, there are a couple of occasions where that's happened. One was meeting Vera Lynn the other was Liza Minnelli. Both times I went a bit shy and cried after meeting them. The rest of them I'd take for a fish and chip butty. I always remember meeting the Queen. I went 'Hiya, Your Highness'. I don't know what she must have thought but she was lovely. Two weeks later she came to see One Man, Two Guvnors, so I must have said something right. I think I'd probably go to pieces if I met Doris Day. I'd probably have convulsions. Ironically, she's now doing what I'd like to do. I've had three dreams in life. I used to be twenty-two stone and my first goal was to lose weight and be healthy. That I achieved on The Biggest Loser. My second was to star in the West End as part of an ensemble - never thinking I'd be a leading lady. My third is yet to happen, and that's to open my own animal sanctuary. That's my bucket list, with other bits in between. That's exactly what Doris Day has done - she's opened an animal sanctuary in California, which I think is just amazing.

Is that last goal attainable quite soon?

No, not in the near future. It would require total commitment and I'd have to hang up my hat, which I'm not ready to do yet, but definitely in the future.

What's your most vivid memory from the first time you stepped on to the West End stage to play Nancy?

My nerves. I was so unbelievably nervous that night. My mum's still got the picture of the first bow I ever took, and when I look at my face it's just pure happiness. When it's a dream come true, it's very difficult to put into words and that's exactly how it was with that night.

You've been referred to on a number of occasions as 'one of the best-loved leading ladies in the West End'. Does it feel surreal when you hear people talking about you in that way?

We just all get on. If you lead a happy ship and you have a good time it makes the job half the trouble. It really does. I've been lucky. In all the shows I've done, they've been like big families. I probably play the mother hen, which is a nice role to play.

In Oliver! you were described as 'the nation's Nancy'. What qualities do you think made people take you to their hearts?

I really don't know. Maybe it's because I speak my mind. It's nice to be important, but it's important to be nice, even when you're having a bad day and you want to tell people to go and stick it where the sun don't shine. You've just got to roll up your sleeves like my nan said and get on with it. I'm still me and I don't ever want to change.

If things hadn't panned out the way they did, what do you think you'd be doing now?

I'd probably have started my animal sanctuary a lot earlier than planned and still be singing in gay bars. They were the only places where I could sing my big show tunes and get away with it. I loved it when I used to start up New York New York or Don't Rain On My Parade. I'd still be singing those songs because I genuinely loved doing it.

All of which has earned you quite a big gay following...

Yeah, I think I'm a trapped drag queen myself. My nan used to know Danny La Rue. I remember being there when I was really young - seeing the big season shows with Brian Convey and Russ Abbot and thinking 'wow, this really is entertainment, it's live, it's great'. I remember my nan taking me to see 42nd Street when it was on at the Winter Gardens. It's all of those little memories from being a child. Of course, growing up in Blackpool I did see quite a few drag queens. I think that's probably where it all stems from.

So was becoming a performer always on your radar?

I think it's either always in you or it's not. I can't watch a film or a show without twitching. Even when I'm putting petrol in my car and I often don't realise that I'm doing it, I'm swaying from side to side to the music. I think it's just in me - I can't help it. So thank you to all those people who pay to buy a ticket. You're paying to feed my addiction to being on stage. Forget the fags and the booze, just give me a show tune.

Were your parents always supportive of your ambition to perform?

Yes, they were always very encouraging - but then they supported me just as much when I was training as a nail technician. When it came to performing, my obstacle was that I went to a girls' school. Sadly, in those early days as a performer, I played lots of leading men. Nancy was my first female leading role.

What advice would you give to someone hoping for a career in musical theatre?

Gain as much knowledge as you can. Don't limit yourself to one thing. Maybe try TV or straight theatre. Get as much experience as you can and always have a back-up plan, like I do. Not only will I have an animal sanctuary, the nail's will be amazing!

You've mastered Nancy in Oliver!, the Lady of the Lake in Spamalot, and now Calamity Jane. What other roles have you got your eye on?

There are a couple of things that are coming up, but I'm not able to say anything apart from that it's all quite exciting. It's a bucket list for a leading lady - but Calamity runs until the end of this year, so I'll be cracking my whip for quite some time yet.

Calamity Jane shows at New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, from Tue 17 to Sat 21 February, and Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Tue 10 to Sat 14 March.

The Top 5 Finalists

After more than 8,500 votes were cast in Part One of the Readers' Awards, we're pleased to announce your top five finalists in each category. Online voting has now re-opened so that you can vote for your winner! Voting will continue right the way through till 27 February. All previous votes will be added to the new votes cast. Make sure you pick up a copy of the April issue of Midlands Zone, because that's where you'll see all of your winners! In the meantime, come on - get voting now at www.midlandszone.co.uk

Best Birmingham Gay Nightclub

Top 5 Finalists:

- Boltz
- Club Chic
- The Core
- The Nightingale
- The Village Underground

Best Midlands Gay Nightclub

Top 5 Finalists:

- Gorgeous - Wolverhampton
- Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent
- Helsinki - Leicester
- The Lion - Walsall
- NG1 - Nottingham

Best Birmingham Gay Bar

Top 5 Finalists:

- Eden
- The Loft Lounge
- Missing
- Sidewalk
- The Village Inn

Best Midlands Gay Bar

Top 5 Finalists:

- Dover Castle - Leicester
- The Lion - Walsall
- Pink - Stoke-on-Trent
- Rainbows - Coventry
- The White Hart - Wolverhampton

Best Midlands Community Gay Bar

Top 5 Finalists:

- Eden - Birmingham
- Equator - Birmingham
- Sloanes - Leicester
- The Wellington - Birmingham
- The White Hart - Wolverhampton

Best Midlands Cafe Bar / Restaurant

Top 5 Finalists:

- Bond Street Tavern - Wolverhampton
- The Loft Lounge - Birmingham
- Matchbox Cafe - Birmingham
- Rainbow & Dove - Leicester
- Sidewalk - Birmingham

Best Midlands Bar/Club for Men

Top 5 Finalists:

- Boltz - Birmingham
- The Core - Birmingham
- Eden - Birmingham
- The Fountain Inn - Birmingham
- The Nightingale - Birmingham

Best Midlands Bar/Club for Women

Top 5 Finalists:

- The Fox - Birmingham
- Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent
- New Foresters - Nottingham
- The Nightingale - Birmingham
- Sidewalk - Birmingham

Best Midlands Venue Outdoor Area

Top 5 Finalists:

- Dover Castle - Leicester
- Eden - Birmingham
- The Fox - Birmingham
- The Lion - Walsall
- The Loft Lounge - Birmingham

Best Midlands New Venue / Refurb

Top 5 Finalists:

- Aceface Barbers - Birmingham (New)
- Bond Street Tavern - Walsall (New)
- Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent (New)
- LGBT Centre - Leicester (New)
- The Lion - Walsall (Refurb)

Best Midlands Venue Front of House Team

Top 5 Finalists:

- Eden - Birmingham
- Equator - Birmingham
- Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent
- The Loft Lounge - Birmingham
- The Nightingale - Birmingham

Best Midlands Venue Security Team

Top 5 Finalists:

- Club Chic - Birmingham
- Eden - Birmingham
- Missing - Birmingham
- The Nightingale - Birmingham
- Sidewalk - Birmingham

Best OVERALL Birmingham Venue

Top 5 Finalists:

- Eden
- The Loft Lounge
- Missing
- The Nightingale
- The Village Inn

Best OVERALL Midlands Venue

Top 5 Finalists:

- Dover Castle - Leicester
- Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent
- Gorgeous - Wolverhampton
- The Lion - Walsall
- NG1 - Nottingham

Best Midlands Venue One-Nighter

Top 5 Finalists:

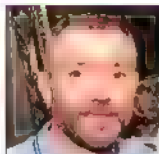
- Breakfast Club
- @ Club Chic - Birmingham
- The Big Saturday Night Out
- @ The Nightingale - Birmingham
- La Voix
- @ Eden - Birmingham
- So it Goes
- @ The Nightingale - Birmingham
- XXL
- @ The Core Club - Birmingham

Best Midlands Live Entertainment venue

Top 5 Finalists:

- Eden - Birmingham
- The Lion - Walsall
- The Nightingale - Birmingham
- The Village Inn - Birmingham
- The White Hart - Wolverhampton

Scene Personality of the Year



■ Garry Prentice



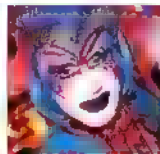
■ Lawrence Barton



■ Marty Smith

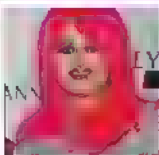


■ Steph Keeble

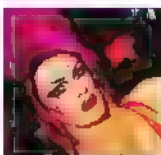


■ Twigg

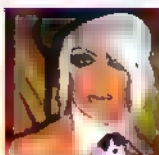
Best Compere/Host in the Midlands



■ Candy Fierce



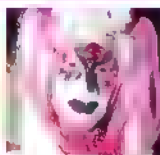
■ Charlotte the Fairy



■ Marty Smith



■ Miss Penny



■ Twigg

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■ Youth Achievement

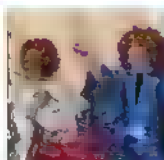
■ Outstanding Contribution

■ Lifetime Achievement

Awards 2015

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Best Cabaret Act In the Midlands



■ Glitter Lips



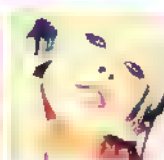
■ La Voix



■ Miss Penny



■ Sandra

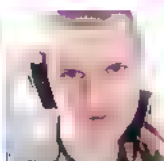


■ Vicky Jackson

Best Midlands Bar DJ



■ Dan Williams
- Eden



■ Deano Trickett
- The Village Inn



■ DJ Mykee
- Missing

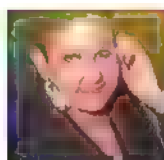


■ Destiny Dyson
- Gossip



■ Rob Lambeth
- Dover Castle

Best Midlands Club DJ



■ Corey Hadley
- The Nightingale



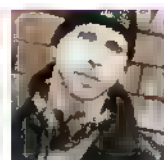
■ Marcus James
- Club Chic



■ Michael Felton
- So It Goes (N'Gale)

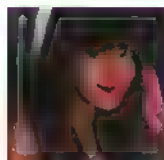


■ Rob Lambeth
- Helsinki

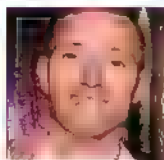


■ Simon Baker
- The Nightingale

Best Front of House Person



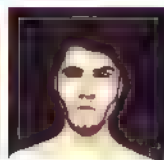
■ Alice Johnson
- The Nightingale



■ Garry Prentice
- Eden



■ Hilli Rishworth
- The Fox



■ Max Chapman
- Missing



■ Ollie Betts
- Missing

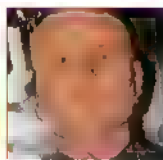
Best Security Person



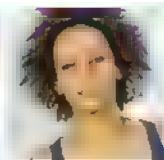
■ Jermaine Holder
- Eden



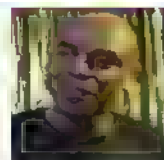
■ Kevin Pearson
- Missing



■ Mark Smith
- Sidewalk



■ Toni Whetter
- The Village Inn



■ Wayne Millwood
- The White Hart

Best Midlands Pride Event

Top 5 Finalists

- Birmingham Pride
- Leicester Pride
- Nottingham Pride
- Stoke Pride
- Wolves Pride

Best Midlands LGBT Event

Top 5 Finalists

- L Fest
- Pink Picnic Birmingham
- Pride In Sport
- Rainbow Film Festival
- SHOUT Festival

Best LGBT Charity or Group of Achievement

Top 5 Finalists

- AB +
- Birmingham LGBT
- Freshwinds
- Healthy Gay Life
- LGBT Network Wolverhampton

Best LGBT Sport or Social Group

Top 5 Finalists

- Acting Out
- Birmingham Blaze FC
- Birmingham Bulls RFC
- Leicester Wildcats
- Rainbow Voices

Best Midlands Health Club / Sauna

Top 5 Finalists

- CS2 - Nottingham
- The Greenhouse - Darlston
- Heroes - Stourbridge
- Splash - Leicester
- Unit 2 - Birmingham

Best LGBT-Friendly Online or Retail Store

Top 5 Finalists

- Aceface Barbers - Birmingham
- Clone Zone - Birmingham
- Prowler - Online
- Selfridges - Birmingham
- Tesco Extra (Hurst St) - B ham



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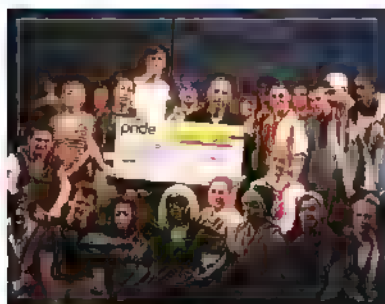
www.midlandszone.co.uk

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BIRMINGHAM PRIDE LOCAL LGBT

A panel from Birmingham Pride last month awarded nearly £46,000 of funding - from monies raised at the 2013 festival - to a number of local charities and community groups. Two of the four rounds of funding saw grants decided by a panel comprising: Steve Ball, Birmingham Repertory Associate Director; Karen Creavin, Head of Sport & Physical Activity at Birmingham City Council; and Steve Bedser, former Birmingham City Council Cabinet Member. Take a look at what some of the groups received, and what they're going to be using their much-needed funding for...

Outspoken



Amount awarded: £8,200

How they're using the money:

Outspoken, a group from the Birmingham School of Acting, received £8,200 of funding from Birmingham Pride. The group are using the money to help combat sexuality prejudice through the arts. They've recently been performing Heterophobia, an urban musical for young audiences that tells the story of a young heterosexual male trying to 'come out'. For more information about Outspoken, visit www.outspokenperformance.co.uk

Birmingham LGBT



Amount awarded: £8,400

How they're using the money:

Birmingham LGBT is one of the city's biggest LGBT charities, offering a wide range of services to the LGBT community. The charity was awarded the most funding so far - £8,400. They'll be utilising the money to offer increased and improved trans* support services.

For more information about Birmingham LGBT and the services they provide for the city's gay community, visit www.bgbt.org

Empower



Amount awarded: £4,700

How they're using the money:

Empower, a mental health service developed and run by LGBT Network Wolverhampton, submitted an application for funding from Birmingham Pride to help improve services for members of the LGBT community suffering from mental health issues. They received £4,700 to go towards the funding of the project.

For more information about Empower, visit the LGBT Network Wolverhampton website: www.gbtwolverhampton.org.uk

X2Y Youth Group



Amount awarded: £4,596.92

How they're using the money:

Wolverhampton's X2Y Youth Group were awarded a helpful £4,596.92 from the Birmingham Pride grants panel. The group, which serves LGBT teens in Wolverhampton, the Black Country and surrounding areas, meet weekly, offering information and guidance as well as somewhere for teens to express themselves without fear or ridicule. For more information about the X2Y Youth Group, visit www.x2y.org.uk

Journey MCC



Amount awarded: £1,000

How they're using the money:

The Journey Metropolitan Community Church in Birmingham were awarded £1,000 from the monies raised at Pride 2013. They'll be using it to help scale up their work within the community and achieve a greater reach. A portion of the money will also allow the church to provide refreshments at its meetings.

For more information about Journey Metropolitan Community Church, visit www.journeymcc.wordpress.com

Alcohol Support



Amount awarded: £1,640

How they're using the money:

The LGBT Alcohol Support Group in Birmingham is run by and for the LGBT community, their partners, families and friends. The group supports community members who've experienced trouble caused by alcohol. In order to help run the group, the Birmingham Pride panel have awarded them a grant of £1,640.

For more information about the LGBT Alcohol Support Group, visit www.gblalcoholsupport.org

GROUPS RECEIVE FUNDING...

City Yoga Project



Amount awarded: £1,000

How they're using the money:

The City Yoga Project in Birmingham were awarded £1,000 to help fund a number of yoga classes specifically targeted towards the LGBT community. The Project encourages LGBT people to do yoga in a safe, relaxed and comfortable environment that is inclusive of all. Yoga can increase your physical activity, strength and balance, and offers long-term benefits in terms of fitness and wellbeing.

For more information about the City Yoga Project, visit www.cityyogabirmingham.co.uk

SIFA Fireside



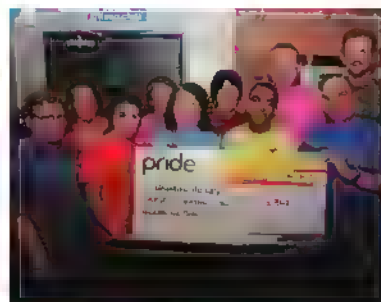
Amount awarded: £4,639

How they're using the money:

SIFA Fireside works seven days a week with some of the most vulnerable adults in society, those experiencing homelessness or who are vulnerably housed. Many of the people they work with are affected by alcohol, facing mental and physical health problems or otherwise socially excluded. The organisation was awarded £4,639 by the Birmingham Pride panel.

For more information about SIFA Fireside, visit www.sifafireside.co.uk

Rainbow Voices



Amount awarded: £7,420

How they're using the money:

Established in 1995, Rainbow Voices in Birmingham provides an opportunity for LGBT people and their friends to meet in a safe space and celebrate their diversity in song. Rainbow Voices welcomes members from all sections of the community and sees diversity as a strength. The group were awarded £7,420 to help fund future shows.

For more information about Birmingham's Rainbow Voices, visit www.rainbow-voices.org.uk

Applications for the third round of funding closed late last month. However, applications are now being welcomed for the fourth and final round of funding, and should be received by Tuesday 31 March 2015. For information on how to apply for a grant from Birmingham Pride, visit www.birminghampride.com. Organisations applying for grants should be clear about the ways in which what they're proposing meets the aims of the Pride Trust organisation. The recipients of grants from the two remaining rounds of Birmingham Pride funding will be published in a future issue of Midlands Zone.

BIRMINGHAM PRIDE 2015 SUPPORTS #FREEDOM



#FREEDOM - Together United

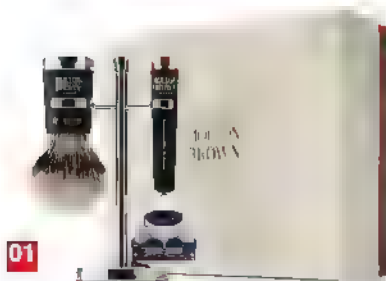
Organisers of Birmingham Pride 2015 have announced that the theme for the two-day LGBT festival, which takes place on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May, is #FREEDOM - Together United. The theme was chosen in order to support the right of LGBTs to freedom of expression. It also recognises the 30th anniversary of the Lesbian And Gays Support The Miners alliance, which was last year depicted in the hit movie Pride. If you're getting involved with Birmingham Pride this year, think about what you can do to help celebrate #FREEDOM, and how Together we can be United.

Early Buy tickets now on sale!

Late last month saw the release of the first batch of Birmingham Pride tickets. The discounted Early Buy tickets are only available for a limited period of time - and when they're gone, they're gone! So be sure to log on to www.birminghampride.com and get yours today!

Early Buy Weekend Tickets cost just £15. 'Day only' tickets for Saturday and Sunday are discounted to just £9 each. If you want to attend Pride in style, then you can grab yourself a VIP ticket costing just £45 for the weekend, or £30 per day at the discounted rate. VIP tickets offer Meet & Greets with participating artists, a champagne reception, buffet, and 'up close and personal' priority viewing areas in front of the stages. Early Buy Child and Senior tickets are also available at the discounted price of £10 per person.

Are you ready for love?



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Love is in the air - and Cupid is probably floating about somewhere too! That's right, it's Valentine's Day (again), so we've picked some of our favourite gifts for you to buy your beloved other half...

01 Molton Brown Luxury Badger Hair Shaving Brush & Razor Set

Treat your man to a luxurious, sophisticated brush & razor set, made with the highest quality materials for a precise shave.

£195.00
www.moltonbrown.co.uk

02 Mighty Power Wallet

Made from highly durable Italian Saffiano leather, this is

everything you'd expect from a quality wallet. This collision of fashion and functionality conceals a built-in 3000mAh battery, so that you can charge your smartphone up to one-and-a-half times whilst you're out and about.

£74.99
www.firebox.com

03 Junk Aura Jock

Spice things up in the bedroom with the Junk Aura Jock!

It's simple, sporty and sexy. Featuring a thick, stretch waistband and two wide straps that wrap around the backside for additional lift and support, this jock is irresistibly comfortable.

£10.00
www.clonezone.co.uk

04 USB Mix Tape

Remember in the old days when you'd painstakingly create a personalised mix tape

for your other half? Well it's back - but now with a USB version to bring it into the 21st century!

£14.95
www.prezzybox.com

05 Personalised Nutella Jar

If your other half loves Nutella as much as they love you, why not pick them up a personalised jar? You can have names well, pretty much anything - printed on it!

£3.99
www.selfridges.com

06 Luxury Leather Holdall
A beautifully stylish, functional and well-made holdall is a great gift idea for the love of your life. Whether they travel a lot or go to the gym, it's certainly going to be useful and used often. Go on, splash out on something nice for them!

£149.00
www.marksandspencer.com



activate

New Year, New (fit) You!

FREE daytime and evening beginners' courses in Tai Chi, Yoga, Body Conditioning & Fitness, Pilates, Cycling, Running, Walking

Drop in yoga Mondays 11am to noon starting 12th January

Book NOW for Tai Chi starting 7th Jan for 4 weeks and Body Conditioning & Fitness starting 12th Jan for 6 weeks

Are you encouraging and empowering? Can you remember how scary trying something new is? Support your community by volunteering with Activate!

For more information contact pennybarber@blgbt.org 0121 643 0821

Project Partners include:-

Midlands Out Badminton, Moseley Shoals Swim Group, Birmingham Bluefins Water Polo, Birmingham Blaze Football Team, Birmingham Bulls Rugby Team, Boot Women (walking), Birmingham Swifts (running), Same Sex Strictly, Outdoor Lads, Birmingham City Council & University of Birmingham Sport.



www.blgbt.org 0121 643 0821

Birmingham LGBT Centre, 38/40 Holloway Circus. B1 1EQ



FIERCE & FASHIONABLE

01



BRONX
AND
BRKLYN

02



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Clothes. We all wear them. Now Christmas is long gone, it's time to start treating yourself again - by grabbing some new items for your wardrobe! Here are some of our favourite pieces from our favourite retailers...

01 White Bronx and Brklyn T-Shirt

Printed tees are a must-have for any casual wardrobe this season, so pick up this simple Bronx and Brklyn printed front tee with simple short sleeves, rounded neckline and a casual fit.

£9.99
www.newlook.co.uk

02 Black Ombre Crew Neck Jumper

This ombre crew neck jumper is the perfect piece for everyday wear - pair with black skinny jeans and lace-up boots to complete the look.

£19.99
www.newlook.co.uk

03 Brown Check Blazer, Waistcoat and Trousers

The brown check design of this suit gives it a traditional heritage feel. The jacket features long sleeves, a button-through front and flap pockets. A smart choice for work and weekend.

Jacket: £90.00
Waistcoat: £40.00
Trousers: £45.00
www.riverisland.com

04 Cream Only & Sons Moustache Print Shirt

Showcasing the label's tongue-in-cheek attitude to dressing, this shirt from Only & Sons is brought to life in a playful moustache print. Classic in cut, it's a fun choice for work or play.

£34.00
www.riverisland.com

05 Intarsia Motif Knitted Jumper

Wrap up warm this season with this striking and simple knitted jumper made from quality cotton, with an intarsia motif.

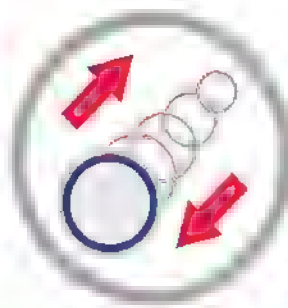
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www.hm.com

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www.clonezone.co.uk

GADGETS The latest and greatest

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06



Gadgets. We're all obsessed with the latest and greatest - so here are our favourites this month...

01 Sony XB950BT Headphones

Set your pulse racing with vibrating bass with Beat Response Control and an Electro Bass Booster to reproduce the thump and thrill of club sound. And with built-in Bluetooth, you never need worry about wires getting in the way.

£149
www.sony.co.uk

02 Sony ZX2 High-Resolution Walkman

Enjoy High-Resolution Audio to its fullest, optimised

through S-Master HX technology. Even compressed audio files are upscaled closer to High-Resolution Audio for rich studio sound. With over 33 hours playback, you can keep the music coming anywhere you go.

£119
www.sony.co.uk

03 Amazon Echo

Amazon Echo is designed around your voice. It's always on - just ask for information, music, news, weather and more. Echo begins working as

soon as it detects the wake word. Echo is also an expertly tuned speaker that can fill any room with immersive sound.

£179
www.amazon.com

04 Sony α7 II

The new α7 II is the next in the α7 series of interchangeable-lens models and the world's first camera with optical 5-axis image stabilisation. The 24.3MP camera offers outstanding image quality in a compact size and light build.

and carries on the traditions of the α7 series.

£1,170
www.panamoz.com

05 Dell XPS 13

The XPS 13 isn't just the smallest 13-inch laptop on the planet, it also has the world's first virtually borderless infinity display with optional touch.

£1,099
www.dell.com

06 LG G Flex 2

The LG G Flex 2 is redefining the curve. Coming soon to the UK, it features a sleek curved design and 5.5" P-OLED display for immersive viewing. The all-new advanced camera features OIS+ and Laser AF technology. All of this powered by a powerful 64-bit octa-core processor.

£799
www.lg.com

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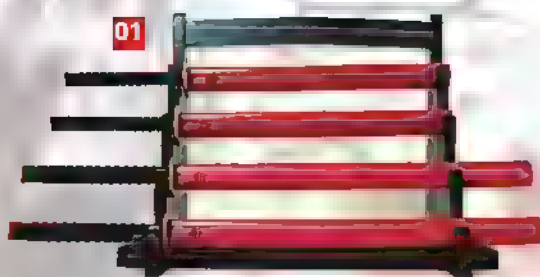
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A Taste of the Orient

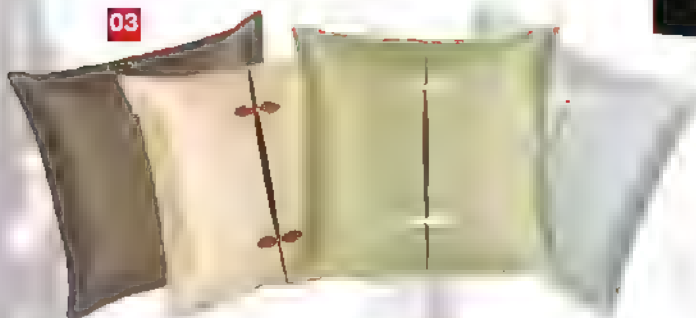
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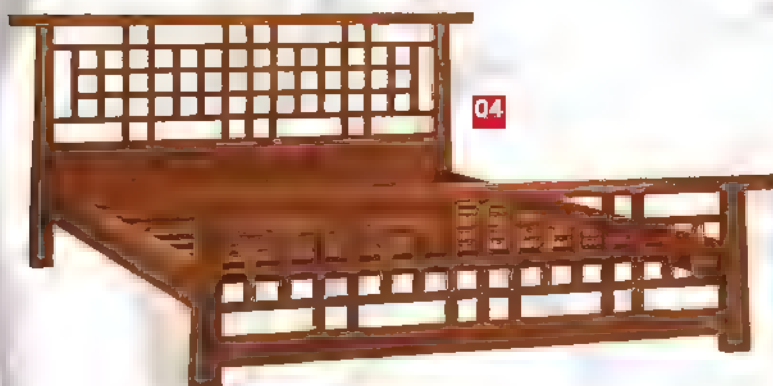
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05



04



01 Samurai Kitchen Knife

Arriving in beautiful red cases and displayed on a stunning stand, these knives look just like real Japanese samurai swords until you pull one out and get to work. £39.95

www.prezzybox.com

02 Television Cabinet

This ingenious cabinet uses the design elements of classic Chinese furniture to solve a very modern problem: how to hide a TV when it's not in use.

£1,345.00
www.shimu.co.uk

03 Handmade Silk Cushion

Comes with a uniquely contrasting silk fabric colour insert, carefully handcrafted to showcase its luminosity and texture. Green Ivory, Mocha and Blue £85.00 each www.swankymatson.com

04 Lattice Bed

The distinctive tapered frames and beautifully crafted lattice headboard and footboard give it a strong oriental style. £1,445.00
www.shimu.co.uk

05 Chinese Deco vase

Limited edition white earthenware, hand-thrown and glazed by the decorator. The colour is achieved by floating the pigments onto the clay before biscuit firing. The pot is completed with a clear glaze. £768.00
www.dennischinaworks.com



WIN! We've got a pair of tickets for The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time to give away!

This National Theatre stage adaptation of Mark Haddon's award-winning novel bagged an impressive seven Olivier Awards in 2013 and has met with almost universal acclaim.

At its centre is the character of 15-year-old Christopher, a boy who describes himself as "a mathematician with some behavioural difficulties". Initially coming under suspicion after discovering the lifeless body of his neighbour's dog, Christopher decides to investigate the crime, and embarks on a journey that will change his world forever. The show runs at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 17 - Saturday 21 February.

Simply answer this question to enter:

How old is the main character, Christopher in the show?

- A) 15
- B) 25
- C) 35

Competition closes on Monday 23 February 2015. Winners will be drawn at random and notified by email.



Visit www.midlandszone.co.uk to enter!

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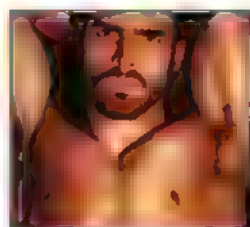
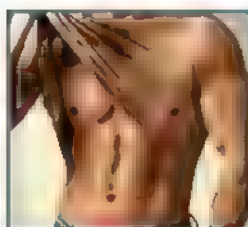
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CUPID'S ARROW!
Enjoy Valentine's Day
by coming out and
celebrating the
gay scene

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

SCENE

FEBRUARY 2015

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE

GAY CLUBBING IN THE MIDLANDS



X FACTOR'S
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JUJUBEE FUN!

The RuPaul's Drag Race star heads to Birmingham for a fire-filled live show

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MONDAY 2 MARCH
GLITTER
LIPS



C:21



VICKY JACKSON

Monday nights at C:21 in Shrewsbury is one of the biggest gay nights in the West Midlands. The first Monday of every month sees the popular venue hosting live cabaret, with February's spot being filled by the one and only Vicky Jackson, this time as Lady Gaga!

Not only that, every Monday night throughout the month sees Marty take to the stage with fun and games!



BIRMINGHAM

2-FOR-1 COCKTAILS AT THE LOFT LOUNGE

When you've finished work for the day, instead of heading straight home, why not pop into The Loft Lounge in Birmingham for a cheeky cocktail or two? Selected cocktails are two-for-one all day and night between Sunday and Friday! Booom! THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two THE LOFT LOUNGE

MINISTRY OF POUND with DJ Mike Emery from 9pm. Selected drinks £1 Open until 2am MISSING BAR

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano Cash prizes and free drinks Happy Hour 12noon-10pm THE VILLAGE INN

POUNDED Come and get Pounded from 6pm onwards. £1

MINISTRY OF POUND AT MISSING BAR!

Birmingham's popular Missing Bar on Hurst Street brings you Pounded each and every Monday. From 9pm onwards, you can get your hands on selected drinks from £1 Spirits, beer, bottles - you name it, it's on offer! MISSING BAR - BIRMINGHAM

on selected spirits, £1 50 Jagerbomb Caring / Strongbow / Sambucca

SUGAR RUSH £2 entry drinks from £2 various Dus NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MONDAY MADNESS Weekly drink h Dc Hc

BAR JESTER

OUTSKIRTS

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

FABULOUS Fun & Games with resident host Marty (The Girl who likes to party) Mon 2 Feb - Live cabaret with Vicky Jackson this time as

Lady Gaga. Free admission before midnight and just £3 after Great drinks offers all night long with drinks starting at just £1! C:21, SHREWSBURY

THE MONDAY CLUB 9pm-5am Student night Everything is £2 (Shots £1) with DJ Lee Edward GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

ENTIRE

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

CHILL NIGHT with Karaoke THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

GET THE PARTY STARTED F

GOSS P. STOKE ON TRENT

STUDENT NIGHT Free admission 11pm-04:50 after midnight

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

2 TILL 2 Open from 11pm

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

DISCO 7pm-midnight NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

£10

If you're looking for a meal before your night out, then don't bother working up a sweat in your own kitchen, creating loads of mess to tidy up. Instead, head to Sidewalk in Birmingham. They have a cracking 'two meals for a tenner' menu - great for you and a mate to enjoy, setting you up for a top night on the town.

2 MEALS FOR



2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two THE LOFT LOUNGE

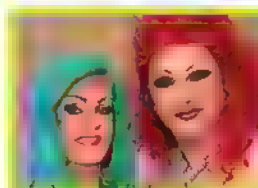
GRAB THE MIC AT MISSING BAR

Everyone loves a bit of karaoke in their lives - so head to Missing Bar in Birmingham and join DJ James from 9pm till late. Whether you're good or bad at singing, it's great fun - so go on, grab the mic!

MISSING KARAOKE With your host

DJ James Party starts at 9pm till late

MISSING BAR



TACKY TUESDAYS

Birmingham gay scene favourites Miss Penny and Charlotte the Harlotte offer a night of fun and games every Tuesday at The Village Inn. There are laughs and prizes galore! Go on, enjoy it!

TACKY TUESDAYS with Charlotte and Miss Penny Songs, Games & Prizes Happy Hour 12noon-10pm THE VILLAGE INN

LOVE UP THE HOLEY F

BAR JESTER

BIG TUESDAY NIGHT PARTY Q

THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

CAMP QUIZ With free buffet 8pm-10pm THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

DIVERSITY Karaoke with prizes from pop & h

EVERYONE

SAMMIE'S SINGERS Karaoke night THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

TWISTED TUESDAYS Hosted Cherry Darling Open 9pm-2am RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till 2am

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

CHILL OUT NIGHT F

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

GAMES NIGHT Free P

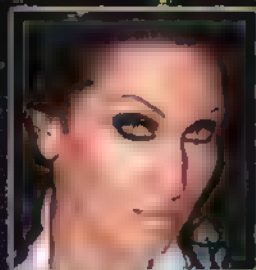
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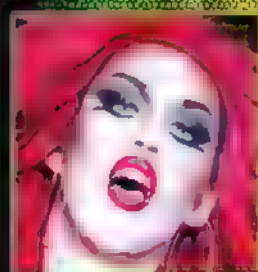
RuPaul's DRAG RACE BATTLE OF THE SEASONS

2015 CONDRAGULATIONS TOUR

HOSTED BY



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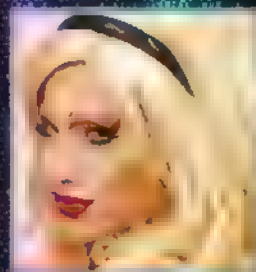
**ADORE
DELANO**



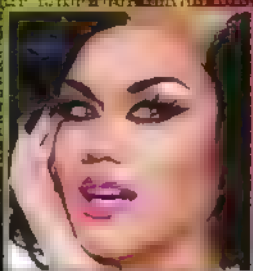
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for more information and tickets: rupaulbots.com

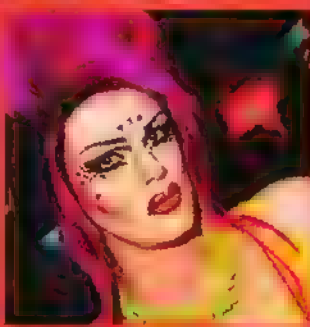
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LINEUP SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SING A SONG with Charlotte the Harlotte at The Village Inn

If you think you've got a singing voice to rival Beyonce, Eille Gouding or Gary Barlow, then pop along to Birmingham's Village Inn and show it off to Charlotte the Harlotte and DJ Deano. Whilst you may not walk away with a multi-million pound recording contract with Simon Cowell, you can walk away with a sense of pride - well, or embarrassment, depending on how you've done!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Shake your tail feathers at Sidewalks new 2 for 1 cocktail menu.

THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.

THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 GOOD 2 MISS Drinks from just £2 with DJ Mike Emery

IT'S COCKTAIL TIME AT THE LOFT LOUNGE!

Rather than heading out for a pint or a double vodka and Coke, why not opt for a cocktail? Or better still, how about two? The Loft Lounge in Birmingham is offering two gorgeous cocktails for the price of one! If you're hungry, why not grab a bite to eat as well?

THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM



MISSING BAR

C FACTOR - with Charlotte the Harlotte
THE VILLAGE INN

BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT SEMI-FINAL

THE FOX

THE FOX

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

HAIR REMOVAL

Hour until 2am. Open 10pm-2am

BAR & RESTAURANT

WEDNESDAY LINE

THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT SEMI-FINAL

Drinks from £4.00

More 10pm-£4.00

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

WACKY WEDNESDAYS

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

EAST MIDLANDS

GAMES NIGHT Free Pool 1pm-2am

Drinks from £1.20

Karaoke & Disco 7pm-2am

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

KARAOKE

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

OUT

NG1, NOTTINGHAM

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Cabaret Live with LA VOIX at Birmingham's Eden Bar

Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist La Voix heads back to Birmingham this month with a fantastic show at Eden! Sadly she didn't quite make it through to the finals of the hit talent show - but that means you can keep her all to ourselves here in the Midlands! Catch her live on stage on Thursday 12 February with her Va Va Voom Boys! You're in for one hell of a show!

EDEN - BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.

THE LOFT LOUNGE

1 ? THE 90S with DJ Dan. Open from 6pm.

EDEN BAR

THROWBACK THURSDAY £1.20 bombs With DJ Mykee (Closed Christmas Day Thu 25th Dec)

MISSING BAR

CULT Bringing dirty house back

home Top Floor from 10pm
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

DJ DEANO

On the

decks

Happy Hour

12noon

2am

THE VILLAGE INN

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DROP THE BOMB start of your weekend £1.50 on all bombs (excluding the Gutterbomb, with our resident DJ Rowan. (Closed Xmas Day Thurs 25 Dec)

SIDEWALK

LA VOIX Thurs 12 Feb Live cabaret with Britain's Got Talent star La Voix and her Va Va Voom boys

EDEN

MISS MARTY & HAPPY HOUR

Songs, Games and Happy Hour until 2am With Miss Marty and DJ Deano

THE VILLAGE INN

GET POUNDED

Every Thursday at The Nightingale sees the students of Birmingham's gay scene head down for the biggest party in the city. Cheap drinks and £5 entry is a great start to this incredible night out!

POUNDED £5 entry Drinks from a £1 DJ Corey playing chart, dance and urban on Ground Floor Miss Marty and DJ Craig with all the pop and cheese you could ask for on the middle floor

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MISS MARTY'S POLICE KRAVAT

Drinks

THE FOX

PARTY POP

BAR JESTER

BAR JESTER

BAR JESTER

BAR JESTER

BAR JESTER

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SAT 7TH FEB



JAKE
Quickenden

GORGEOUS

I'm a Celebrity & X Factor's JAKE QUICKENDEN Live on Stage!

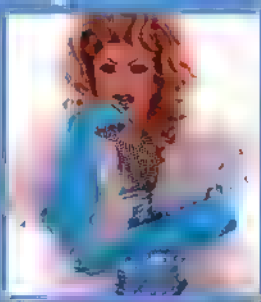
£5 DOOR ENTRY ALL NIGHT

WWW.GORGEOUSCLUB.CO.UK /// FACEBOOK.COM/GORGEOUS
34-36 SCHOOL STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV1 4LF

LIFE IS A CABARET

Birmingham's Village Inn

If you're out on a Friday night and looking for some great entertainment, then look no further than Birmingham's award-winning Village Inn. February sees four great acts take to the stage. Kicking off the month's line-up is camp duo Glitter Lips on Friday the 8th, whilst the following week sees Cassidy Connors dropping in to say hi. Miss Penny gives it her all on Friday the 20th, with the brilliant Sandra wrapping things up on the 27th.



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES - DJ Pam takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics house, R&B and all your favourites. Enjoy all day every day prices too. **EDEN BAR**

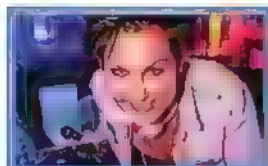
DJ JAMES HOSTS A NIGHT OF PARTY TUNES

Every Friday sees Birmingham's Missing Bar hosting a night of party anthems. Join DJ James from 9pm till late and blast out some of your favourite songs over the speakers! Don't forget there are great drinks offers too! **MISSING - BIRMINGHAM**

BIG GAY FRIDAY - Party anthems all night long with Missing's DJ James. Open until the early hours. **MISSING BAR**

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikki. **EDEN BAR**

FREAKY FRIDAY with DJ Lotty. Big name cabaret at midnight. Open until 6am. **Fri 6 Feb** - Glitter Lips. **Fri 13 Feb** - Cassidy Connors. **Fri 20 Feb** - Miss Penny. **Fri 27 Feb** - Sandra. **THE VILLAGE INN**



INFUSION

Join DJ Corey every Friday night for Infusion. Corey will be playing the best anthems and floorfillers on the scene. Drinks are from £2 all night long - and it's £2 entry all night long too!

INFUSION - Free Entry. Absolute Anthems and Floor Fillers with DJ Corey. Drinks from £2. Admission £2. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

KICK START - Kick start the weekend from 9pm till the early hours. Hosted by James. **MISSING BAR**

L8R - With Charlotte the Harlot. Open until 6am every Friday. **THE VILLAGE INN**

LIP GLOSS - **Fri 6 Feb** - 3rd Birthday Party and re-launch event with new host Miss Penny. Live entertainment from Mzz Kimberley and stripper Black Stallion. **EDEN BAR**

MIDSBEAR MEET-UP AT EDEN BAR

Friday 20 February sees the monthly Midsbears meet-up take place at Birmingham's Eden Bar. If you've not been before, it's a monthly social group for Bears and their admirers. It's a great night out, so be sure to pop along! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

MIDSBARS - **Fri 20 Feb** - Christmas Party - monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers. **EDEN BAR**

OLD SKOOL GARAGE - The first Friday of the month sees the Nightingale go back in time, playing some of the best in old skool garage. A night not to be missed. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

SAATHI - **Fri 27 Feb** - Every last Friday monthly. South Asian Gay and Lesbian club night. Bollywood. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

VINTAGE FRIDAYS AT THE LOFT LOUNGE

If you're into a bit of old school music, head down to The Loft Lounge in Birmingham every Friday night for a hot helping of Motown, Northern Soul, funk, rock and all of your classic favourites. **THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM**

and Bhangra. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

SING STAR SUPERSTAR with DJ Nikki every Friday - your chance to win cash. **EDEN BAR**

VINTAGE FRIDAYS - a night of soul, funk, rock, motown, Northern Soul and all the classic favourites. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**



XXL

Every third Friday of the month sees the Midlands' biggest men-only night take place at The Core in Birmingham. Join DJ Christian M for a great night out with the men of the Midlands on Friday the 20th. **THE CORE CLUB**

XXL - **Fri 20 Feb** - Men only night with DJ Christian M. Early Bear offers until 11pm. Every 3rd Friday of each month. **THE CORE CLUB**

FUNK'D UP - alternate Sat. night. Funky, vocal house. 11pm. **THE CORE CLUB**

CLUB CHIC

KARAOKE - Come and join in. **THE FOX**

THE FOX

RETRO FRIDAY - Retro tunes with DJ Jester. **BAR JESTER**

WEST MIDLANDS

LUSH & YOLO! - 1st Fri monthly. Drinks from £1 until midnight, with resident DJs. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

TV PARTY NIGHT - A Men's Night for TVs, Cross Dressers and Admirers. Every Friday night at **THE GREENHOUSE, DARLSTON**

BANG - The big weekend party. **THE LION, WALSALL**

THE LION, WALSALL

THE LION, WALSALL

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

FRIDAY SOCIAL with DJ. **THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE**

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

KARAOKE - Moses 8pm-4am. **THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

START THE WEEKEND - Free adm. **PINK, STOKE ON TRENT**

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

TFI FRIDAY - A fun and funky mix. **BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER**

BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

EAST MIDLANDS

CLUB NIGHT with DJ Rob. **HELINSKI, LEICESTER**

HELINSKI, LEICESTER

PINK POUNDER - Every Friday night. **THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

VALUE FRIDAY - Disco 9pm-4.30am. **NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE - Free adm. **NG1, NOTTINGHAM**

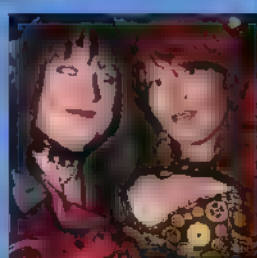
THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE - Free adm. **NG1, NOTTINGHAM**

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE - Free adm. **NG1, NOTTINGHAM**

NG1, NOTTINGHAM

LIP GLOSS celebrates its 10th birthday this month!

The first Friday of every month (6 Feb) sees Birmingham's trans* community, their friends and admirers come together for a night of fun at the city's popular Eden Bar! This month is a special one for the event as it's celebrating its third birthday - and doing so in style! Miss Penny is the new host, and entertainment comes from Mzz Kimberley and stripper Stallion! It's only £3 entry, so what're you waiting for?



Love is in the air this VALENTINE'S DAY in Brum!

Valentine's Day - it's one of those days you either love or hate! If you're single, you'll hate it; if you're in a relationship, you'll love the attention! Either way, Birmingham's gay scene has some fantastic events to help you celebrate. The Loft Lounge is offering a great menu to wine and dine your loved one, whilst Sidewalk has introduced a special Love Bomb for just £1.50. Over at Missing, there's a Traffic Light Party to help you find love - if you need it, of course!

VALENTINE'S DAY - BIRMINGHAM



BIRMINGHAM

DJ DAN TAKES YOU BACK TO THE '80s

If you fancy turning back the clock thirty-odd years, then head down to Eden Bar in Birmingham, where DJ Dan takes it back to the 1980s. Expect some of the biggest tunes from the decade, not to mention cheap drinks promotions! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

80s HITS with DJ Dan from 2am it's back to the 80s with cheap drink promotions
EDEN BAR

THE ATTIC Available for hire. Call the venue for more info. 0121 622 4256
EDEN BAR

BACK TO THE 80s 2am-4am
EDEN BAR

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Over 2 floors. 3 DJs. Open til 8am. With DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With DJ Tonic. In The Village Underground
THE VILLAGE INN

IT'S SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE NIGHTINGALE

Saturday is without doubt the biggest night of the week at The Nightingale Club in Birmingham. You've got three floors of partying, split across four great rooms of music. You'd be mad not to pop in and party the night away!
THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Every Saturday with loads of drinks promotions
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

CULT Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

JUJUBEE Sat 28 Feb The RuPaul's Drag Race star hits Birmingham. Hard. She loves fried

chicken and big dicks
THE NIGHTINGALE

KARAOKE & COCKTAILS in The Attic plus music from across the decades
MISSING

L&R With Charlotte the Harlotte. Open until 8am every Saturday
THE VILLAGE INN



MARY MAC RETURNS TO BIRMINGHAM

Saturday 28 February sees the return of Mary Mac at Eden Bar in Birmingham. With a great voice and hilarious quips aplenty, she'll make sure you have a night out to remember. It's free entry too!
EDEN BAR

MARY MAC Sat 28 Feb Live cabaret from the amazing Mary Mac
EDEN

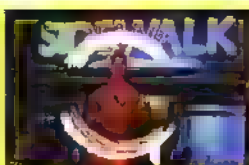
SATURDAY NIGHT PARTY with DJ Mykee playing the best party tunes. Featuring Twiggy and sexy door boys. Open until 4am
MISSING

SATURDAY SESSIONS WITH SIMON BAKER

Every Saturday night sees veteran DJ Simon Baker take to the decks at The Loft Lounge in Birmingham, ensuring your evening gets off to a great start. It's the perfect way to relax - or to get the party started!
THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM

SATURDAY SESSIONS With DJ Simon Baker from 8pm
THE LOFT LOUNGE

SATURS-FACTION Welcome in the



SATURS-FACTION AT BRUM'S SIDEWALK

One of Birmingham's most popular bars, Sidewalk promises a great night of top satisfaction, with resident DJ Kam playing the very best music to help you kick off your evening in style. There are great drinks offers too! **SIDEWALK - BIRMINGHAM**

weekend with resident DJ playing the best of everything
SIDEWALK

SWAGGERLICIOUS Every Saturday night (Room 4)
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

TRAFFIC LIGHT PARTY Sat 14 Feb Pick the glowstick that matches your love life status. Green. Keen. As Yellow. Curious and Red. Taken
MISSING

VALENTINE'S DAY Sat 14 Feb Sweet treats, love heart sticker giveaway and 'Love Bombs' for £1.50
SIDEWALK

VALENTINE'S DINNER Sat 14 Feb 2 Courses for £19.95. 3 Course for £24. Includes a glass of Prosecco. Call 0121 622 2444 to book
THE LOFT LOUNGE

THE BREAKFAST CLUB Eve

CLUB CHIC

DJ NIKKI 1st Sat monthly
EQUATOR BAR

DJ PARTY NIGHT Open

THE FOX

#JUST SAYING Get in the party

BAR JESTER

KARAOKE Every Sat
THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

CAMP & SLAG 9pm-6am. Drinks from £1.50 until midnight. DJ Phil Gardner until 2.30am then Slag residents until sunrise
GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

BIG NIGHT OUT Big
THE LION, WALSALL

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Ch & Charts. Open midday-4pm. \$

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

INCLUSION Birmingham & L&L D

NOT TO MISS Free admission before 11pm. Tanja Hyde's cabaret show 9pm
PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

EAST MIDLANDS

DISCO WEDNESDAY PARTY 9pm-6am. Free entry before 1pm. £3 before 1am
THE BULL, NOTTINGHAM

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT 10.30-6.30am. 3 DJs. With E. F. missing

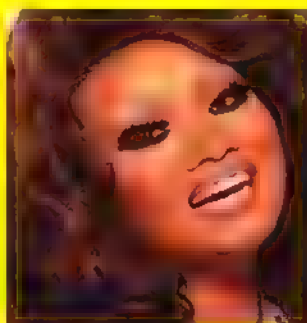
GENI CACCI
NG1, NOTTINGHAM

CLUB NIGHT With DJ N. no floor fillers and club band from midnight. Free entry before midnight. £6 after
HELSINKI, LEICESTER

RuPaul's Drag Race star JUJUBEE heads to Brum club

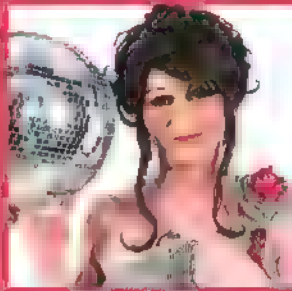
If you're a massive fan of RuPaul's Drag Race, then you'll already know that over the past few months The Nightingale has been hosting some of your favourite drag queens from the show. Well this month you're in for a real treat, as the fried chicken-lovin' Jujubee appears live on stage! If you want to see her, pop down on Saturday 28 February. It's gonna be a screamer!

THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM



LIVE CABARET at The Village Inn with Mrs Mills and more

If you're a big fan of cabaret, and Friday night at The Village Inn wasn't enough for you, fear not - the popular Hurst Street venue hosts cabaret on Sunday nights too! This month's stars are: Mrs Mills (Sun 1 Feb), Amy Laqueef (Sun 8 Feb), Charlotte the Harlotte (Sun 15 Feb) and the Champagne Shirley (Sun 22 Feb). Plus, it's happy hour till 10pm, so get down there and end the week with a laugh!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikk. Every Sunday **EDNA WALK**

MISS PENNY'S SUPER SIZE SUNDAYS Cabaret every Sunday hosted by the one and only Miss Penny on stage at 8.30pm and 10.30pm **MISSING - BIRMINGHAM**

SUNDAY BREAKFAST The perfect hangover cure from 9am. Just £7.95. Carvery from 12noon for just £9.95

THE LOFT LOUNGE

SUNDAY SESSION & LIVE CABARET with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano. Plus Bingo with Mrs Mills from 7pm. **Sun 1 Feb** Mrs Mills **Sun 8 Feb** Amy Laqueef **Sun 15 Feb** Charlotte the Harlotte **Sun 22 Feb** Champagne Shirley. Happy Hour 12pm-10pm. **THE VILLAGE INN**

SUPER SUNDAY DINNER served from 1pm. Cure that hangover and choose from a variety of meats



PENNY'S SUPER SIZED SUNDAYS AT MISSING

Head down to Birmingham's Missing Bar every Sunday and enjoy some live cabaret from the one and only Miss Penny. She'll be hosting two shows, at 8.30pm and 10.30pm. Go on, just do it!

MISSING - BIRMINGHAM

with all the best bits of a roast for only £6.95 **SIDEWALK**

CHILL OUT

at 8.30pm

THE FOX

SUNDAY IS FUNDAY with Baby G. Happy Hour 12pm-late. **BAR JESTER**

THREE SQUARES LUNcheon

THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

MARTY'S PARTY 9pm-4am. Fun &

Games, Karaoke, Prizes and all round mayhem. Drinks from £2 **GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

CHILL OUT At 8.30pm

THE PARTY LOUNGE Relax

LION BAR & CLUB, WALSHALL

QUEENS OF DRAG with The

RANDOM PARTY NIGHT Open

7pm-2am with drink from

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

SUNDAY ROAST Served from 2

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDS

BRUNCH CLUB 11am-5pm

RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER

KARAOKE & DISCO 7pm-2am

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

KARAOKE WITH T 4pm-5pm

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

FEB 14TH 2014



Valentine's Day

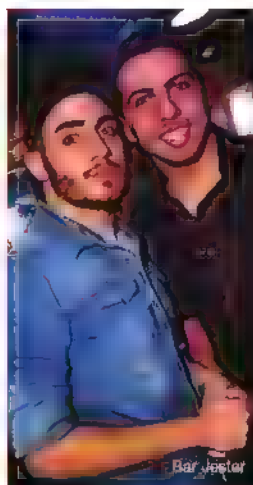
LOVE HEART STICKER GIVEAWAY

LOVE BOMBS £1.50

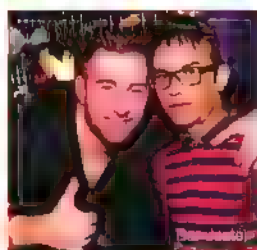
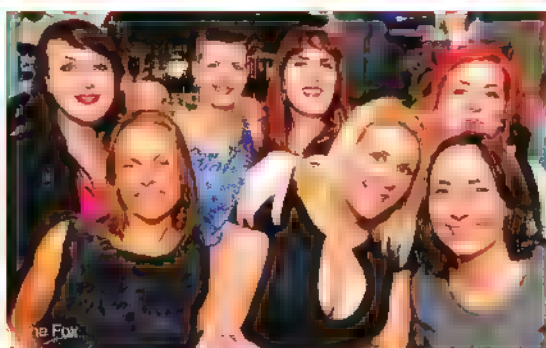
SIDEWALK

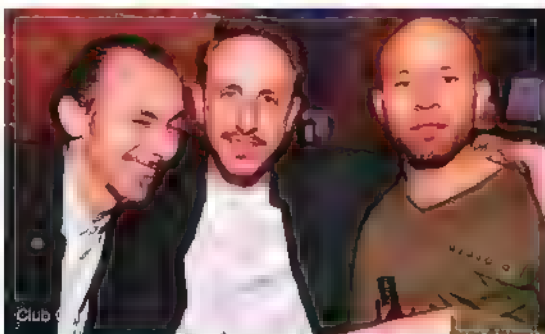
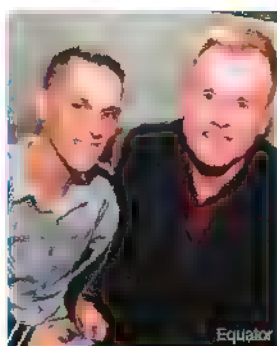
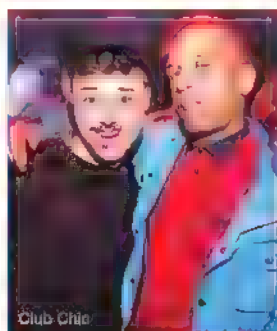
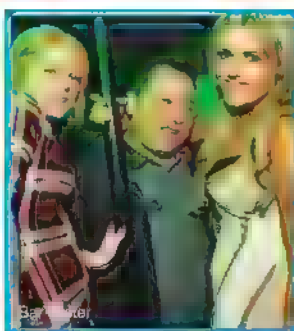
25 HURST STREET BIRMINGHAM B5 6SE

Out and about around Birmingham's Gay Village...

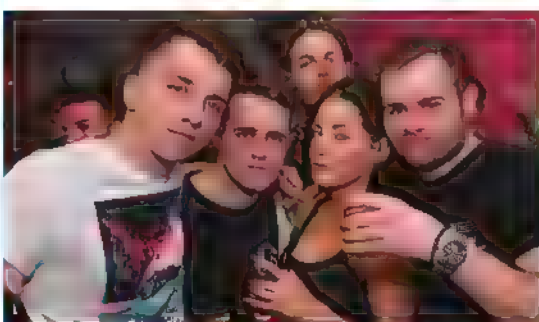
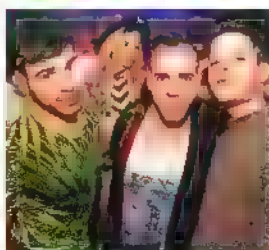
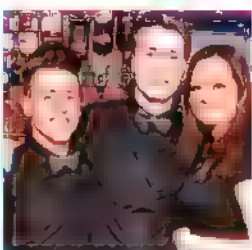
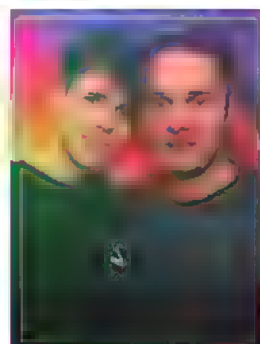
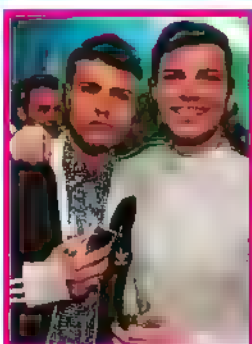
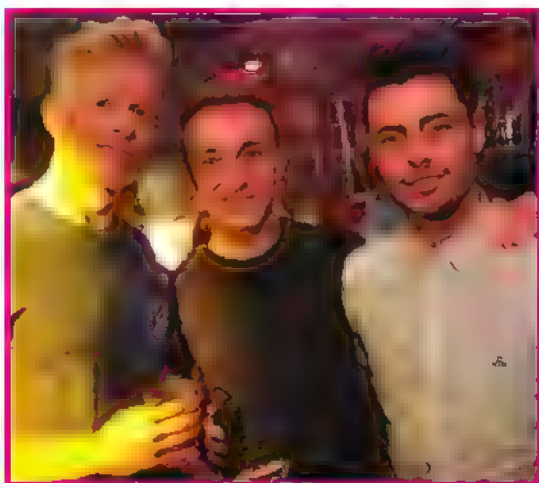


More great photos on [facebook](#)





Dance the night away at Brum's **Village Inn**



Pictures by Laura Byrne

THE VILLAGE

February

6TH



Glitter Lips

13TH



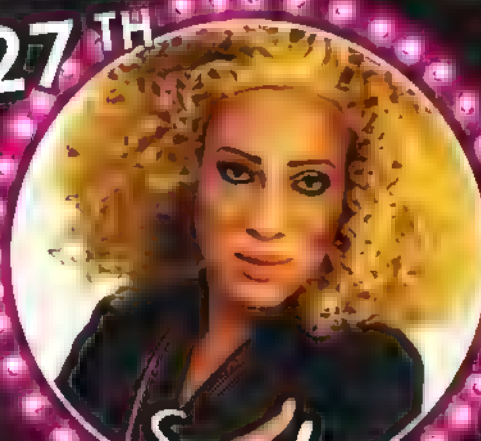
Cassidy Connors

20TH



Miss Penny

27TH



Sandra

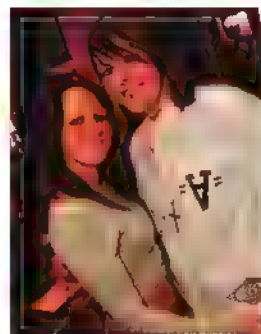
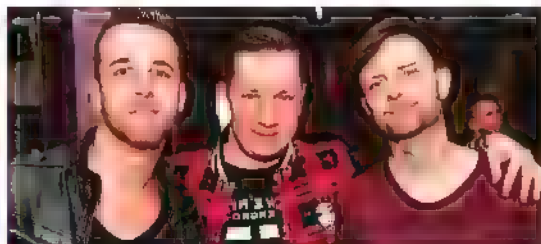
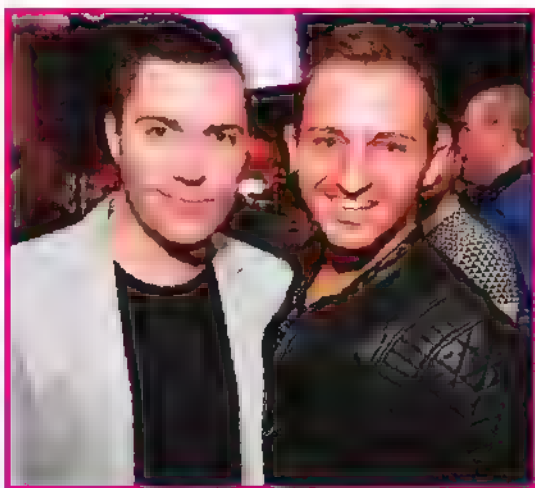
FRIDAY TILL 6AM
SATURDAY TILL 8AM



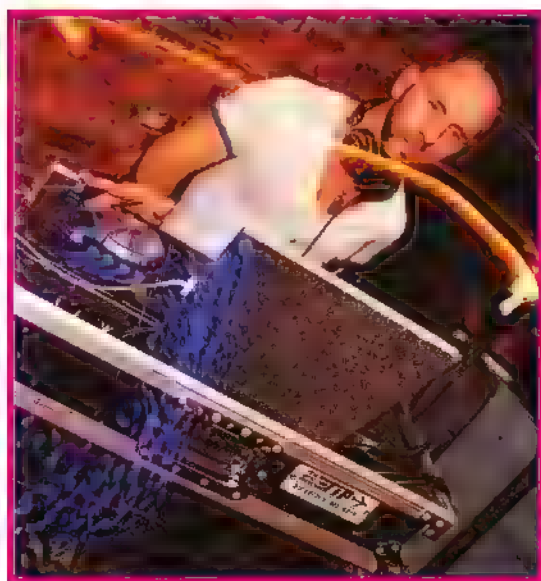
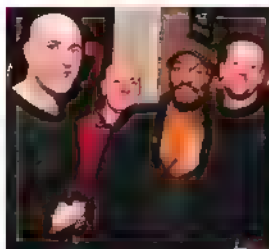
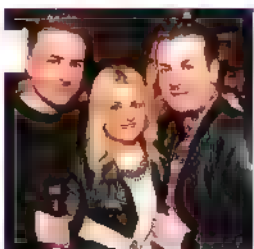
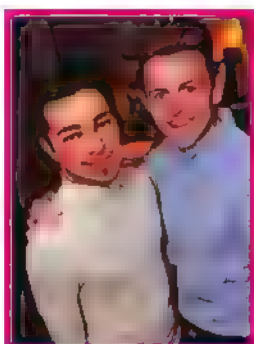
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Pictures by Laura Syme

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8.00pm

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2nd Place Free Round

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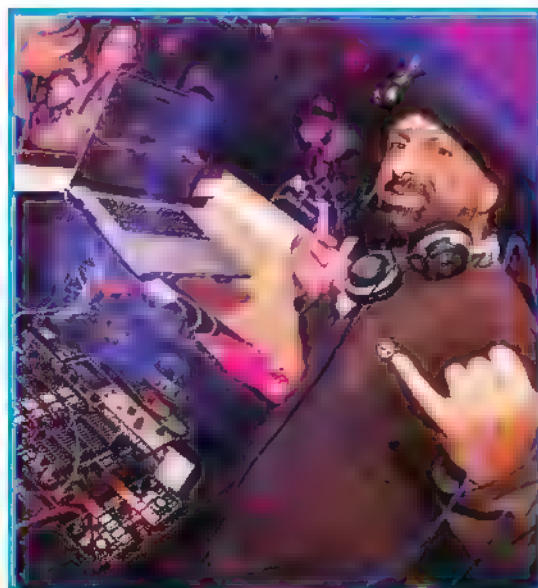
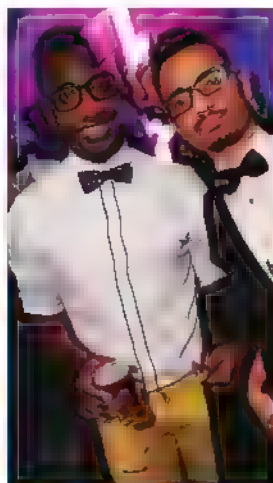
Including glass of
prosecco just £19.95

3 COURSES

Including glass of
prosecco just £24

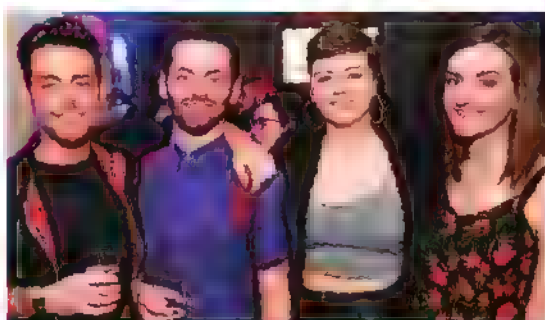
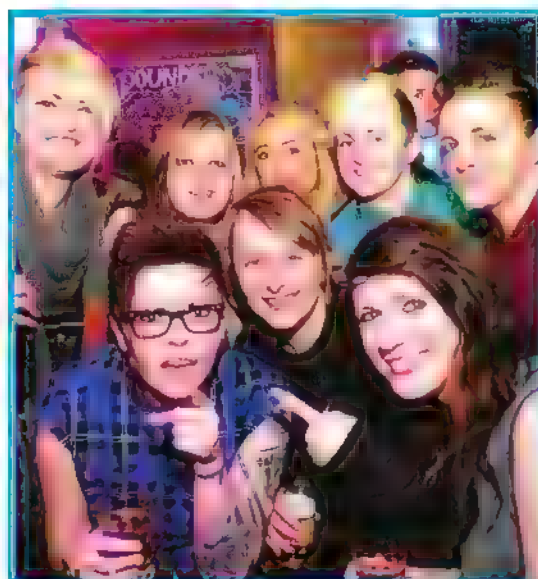
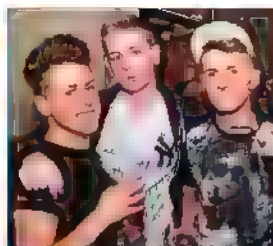
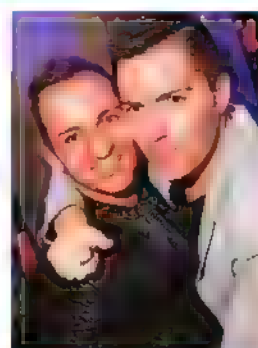
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There's a great atmosphere at Brum's Sidewalk!



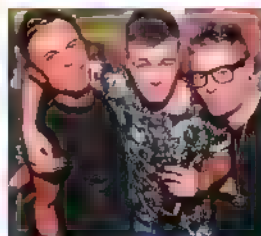
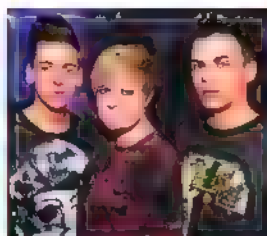
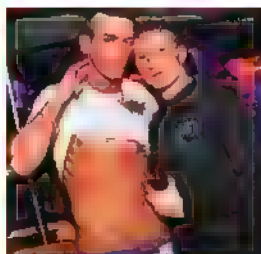
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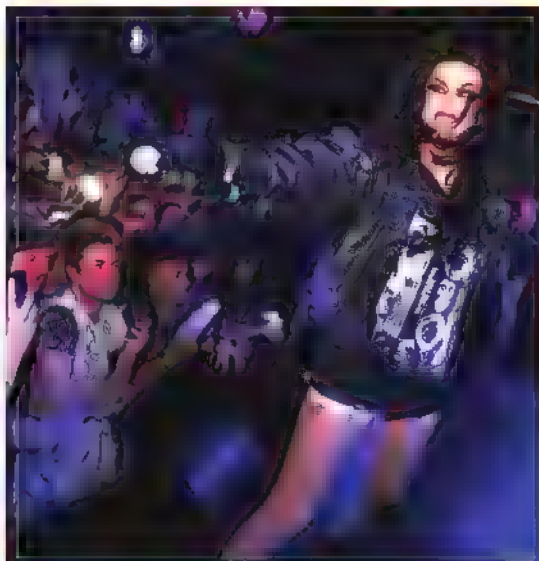
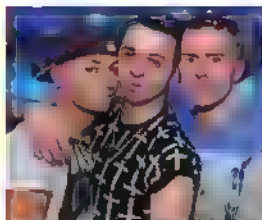
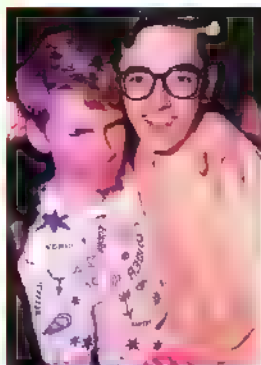


Midlandszone by @midlandszone

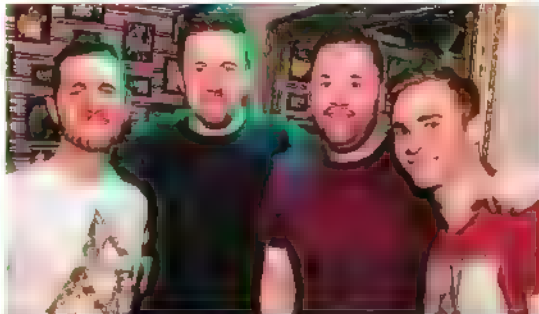
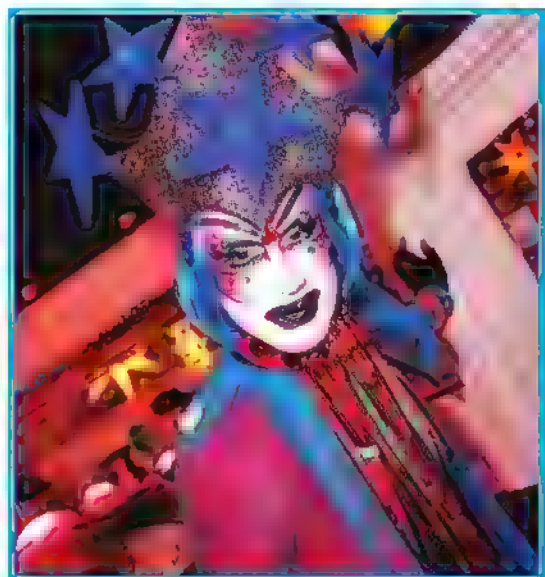
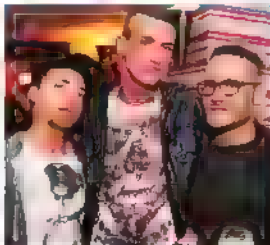
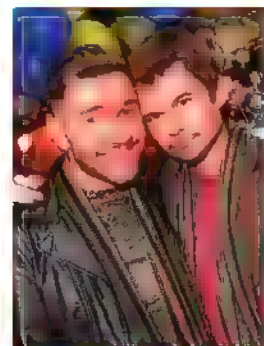
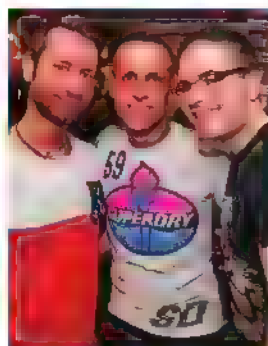
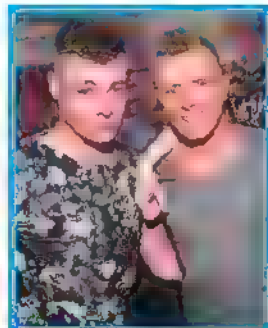
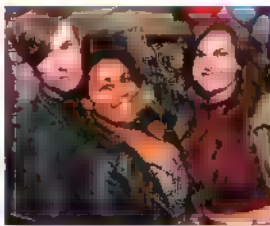
The gays & gals of Birmingham love **The Nightingale**



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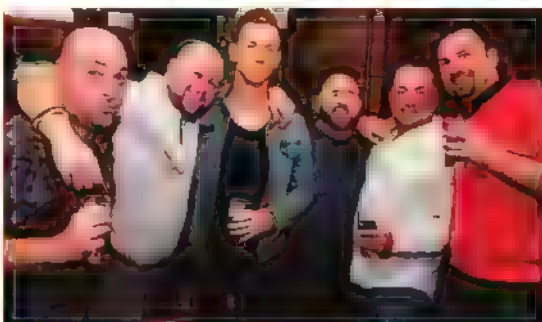
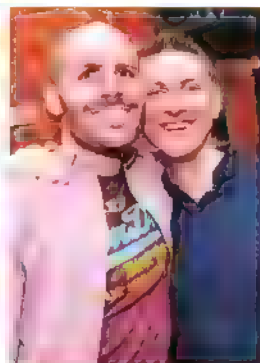
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There's boys and men galore at Brum's **Eden Bar!**



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edenedeneden

EDEN FEBRUARY

edenedeneden

Fri 6th 3rd BIRTHDAY PARTY

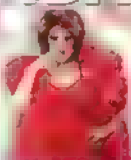
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Mizz Kimberley**

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**with NEW host
MISS PENNY!**



**STRIPPER
Black
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Fri 20th

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EVERY FR. & SUN

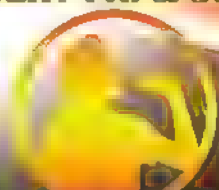
EVERY SAT



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**90s HITS WITH
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COME ALONG & SING
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REGULAR CROWD**



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80s FROM 2-4 AM &
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exclusive to eden

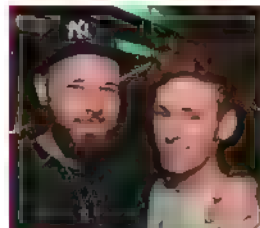
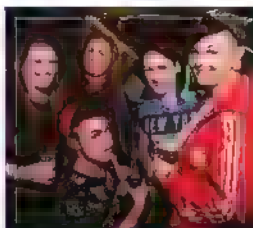
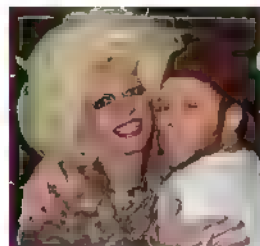
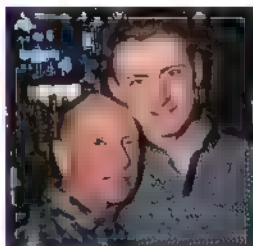


**& Sat 28th
MARY MAC**

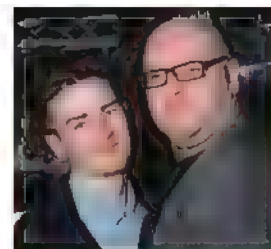
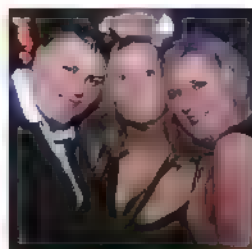
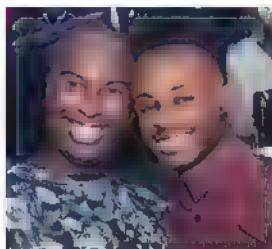
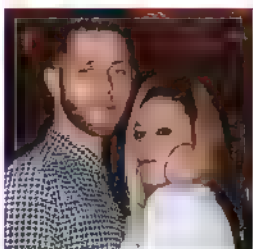
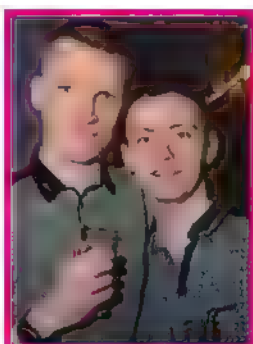
Open from 2pm every day

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It's a roaring night out at **The Lion** in Walsall...



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Picture by Kristofer Green

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f thecoreclubbirmingham

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f eden.bar
See pictures on page 48

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Wrentham St, B5 6QL
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THE FOX

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RSVP

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www.sidewalkbirmingham.co.uk
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THE VILLAGE INN

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THE WELLINGTON

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Tel: 0121 622 2592

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www.c21bar.co.uk
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www.thepeachtree.co.uk
f ThePeachTreeRestaurant

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f SpiritShrewsbury

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f gossipstoke

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WV2 2JQ
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Tel: 01905 780467

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Tel: 01905 20218

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Tel: 01332 381742

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DOVER CASTLE

34 Dover St LE16PT
Tel: 01625 53052

HELSINKI

94 Rutland St LE1 1SB
Tel: 01625 47568

RAINBOW & DOVE

185 Charles St LE1 1LA
Tel: 01625 47568

SLOANES

35 New Walk LE1 6RL
Tel: 01625 22220

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YOLO Gay every Wed
Beirgrave Gate LE1 3GR
Tel: 01625 17986

NORTHAMPTON

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ADVERTS
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Page
46

ZONE

BIRMINGHAM VENUES



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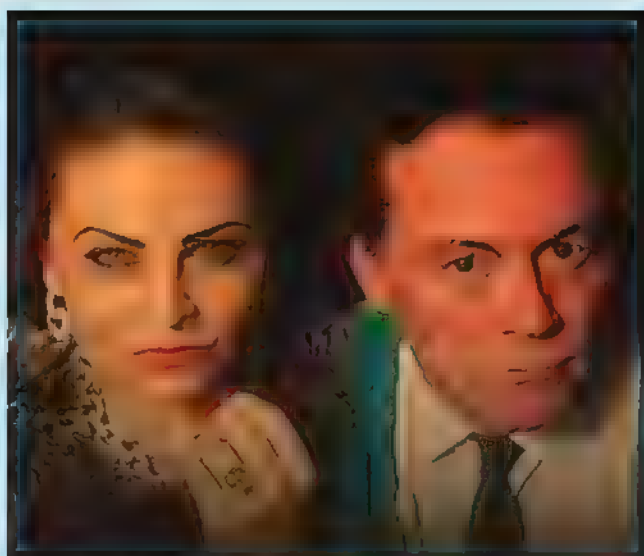
IN THE MIDLANDS ZONE
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Call: Adrian Parker
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e: adrian.parker@
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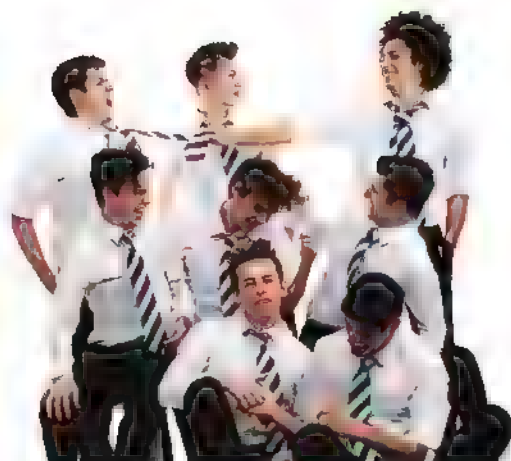


The Liz And Dick Show

Undoubtedly one of the twentieth century's most glamorous celebrity couples, Richard Burton and gay icon Elizabeth Taylor were passionate lovers who fought like cat and dog. Here, as Burton cajoles Taylor into learning the part which would lead to her second Oscar, the couple's always passionate, often tempestuous relationship is brought under the full glare of an unforgiving spotlight...

Ken McConnel and Lydia Poole are the performers who bicker, bite, snarl and swear their way through a turbulent evening as Liz and Dick.

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 February



The History Boys

Gay playwright Caryl Churchill's award-winning play is set in a boys' school in northern England in the 1980s.

A young teacher named Irwin has been brought in to coach the pupils for the Oxbridge exam - but fellow teacher Hector believes instead in learning for its own sake. "Realistically the person who parents would want teaching their child would be Irwin, as Irwin would get you into university," says Churchill. "However, sentimentally, their hearts would be with Hector, because he's the type of teacher everyone wants. Everybody always wishes they'd earned more poetry at school and had someone who would inspire them like that. And it's the fact that, in a way, I couldn't resolve this conflict in my head which made me write the play."

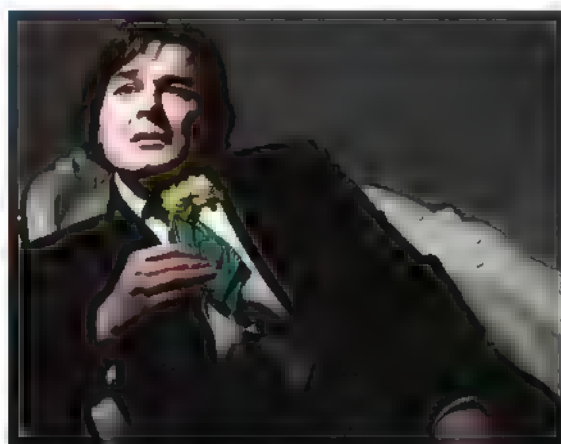
Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 3 - Sat 7 February.
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Mon 23 - Sat 28 February



Dana Alexander

Tomboy comedian Dana Alexander was once billed as the only black female comic on the Canadian comedy circuit. Now she's here in the UK, presenting an outspoken, irreverent and ballsy style of humour that sources its subject matter from her diverse lifestyle, her gay friends and her crazy Jamaican family.

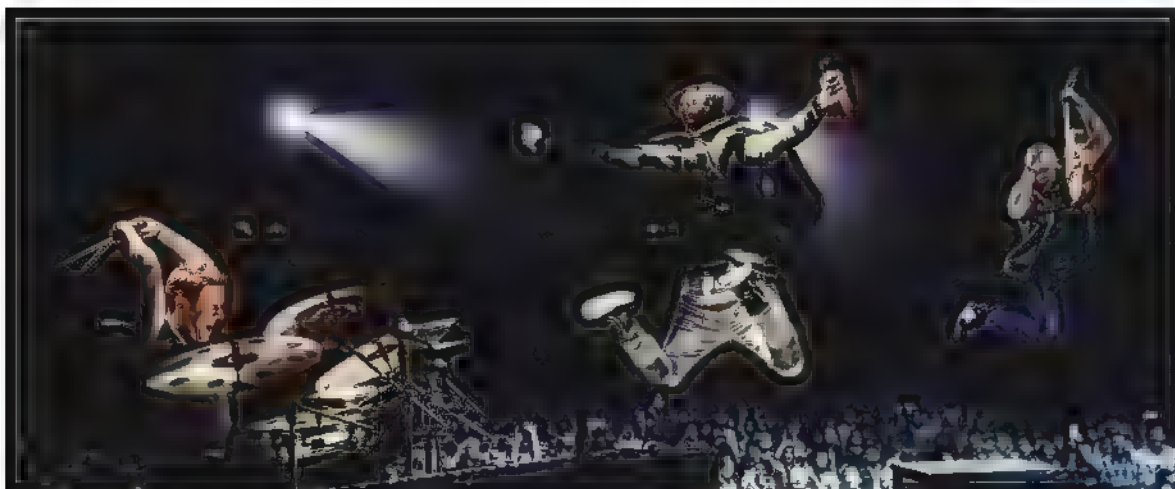
Players Bar, Birmingham, Saturday 7 February; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thursday 12 - Saturday 14 February



Wilde Without The Boy

"The gods had given me almost everything," wrote Oscar Wilde in *De Profundis*, the letter he sent to his lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, from his cell in Reading gaol, where he'd been imprisoned for acts of gross indecency with other males. "Genius, brilliancy, intellectuality, daring. Along with these things I had things that were different. I let myself be lured in to long spells of senseless and sensual ease." This dramatic interpretation of *De Profundis* is directed and dramatised by the award-winning Gareth Armstrong and performed by Gerard Logan. It's accompanied by a companion piece from the same two men, *Wilde's The Ballad Of Reading Gaol* - a poem narrating the execution of Charles Thomas Woollidge, who'd been convicted of murdering his wife.

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 8 February



The Script

From pulling a woman out of her car after she'd crashed on the M40 to performing in front of the Queen (and impressing her so much that she actually clapped *once* when she wasn't expected to clap at all), it's fair to say that The Script know how to keep their name hovering around the headlines.

Comprised of vocalist/pianist Danny O'Donoghue, vocalist/guitarist Mark Sheehan and drummer Glen Power, the Irish pop rock band formed in 2001, and have pretty much been going from strength to strength ever since.

Their 2008 eponymous debut album, featuring hit songs 'The Man Who Can't Be Moved' and 'Breakeven' (Falling To Pieces), set them up for a career in which their music's been featured in all manner of popular TV series, including *90210*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *Waterloo Road*, *EastEnders*, *Made In Chelsea* and *The Vampire Diaries*. Frontman Danny O'Donoghue, meanwhile, appeared as a coach in the first two series of BBC One's Saturday night talent show, *The Voice*.

This latest Script tour comes in support of the trio's fourth album, *No Sound Without Silence*. Labrinth support.

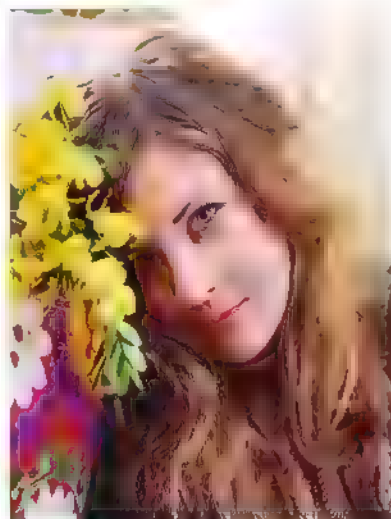
Genting Arena (formerly LG Arena), Birmingham, Thurs 26 February



Kaiser Chiefs

This is a band that needs no introduction - particularly since lead singer Ricky Wilson became a judge on BBC One's *The Voice*. Primarily inspired by new wave and punk rock music of the late 1970s and 1980s, the band have released five original studio albums, including *Employment* (2005) - which reached number two on the UK album chart - and *Education, Education, Education & War* (2014). Having kicked off 2015 supporting one of the world's biggest rock groups, Foo Fighters in Brazil, the band have a busy few months ahead of them. Not only do they have a string of UK and US tour dates, they're also currently working on their sixth studio album. Public Service Broadcasting support.

Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, Fri 6 February



Rumer

Making her debut in 2010 with million-selling album *Seasons Of My Soul*, Rumer's nostalgic, easy-listening style earned her comparisons with 1970s chanteuse Karen Carpenter. Retreating from the limelight on doctor's orders, she made a low-key comeback with *Boys Don't Cry*, an album of covers by American male singer-songwriters. She returns with an eleven-date tour, her first performances in two years, to present *Into Colour*, an album of unashamedly introspective work.

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Mon 23 February



Fifty Shades Of Grey **CERT tbc**

Starring Dakota Johnson, Jamie Dornan, Eloise Mumford, Luke Grimes, Rita Ora, Victor Rasuk, Jennifer Ehle, Marcia Gay Harden Directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson (USA)

By being released on St. Valentine's Day, *Fifty Shades of Grey* has really become a mainstream phenomenon. The first volume of E.L. James' 'literary' trilogy was initially deemed smutty, even pornographic, but even so became something of a housewives' choice. In August of 2012, Amazon announced that it had sold more copies of the novel than the entire *Harry Potter* series put together. Pundits have suspected that part of the title's success was due to its availability as an e-book, so that your mother could read it on public transport with impunity. Either way, a film version was inevitable and here we have it. Expect blindfolds and spanking. Incidentally, the screenplay is by Kelly Marcel, sister of Rosie Marcel, the actress who plays Jac Naylor on *Hollyoaks*. Out 13 February



The Boy Next Door **CERT tbc**

Starring Jennifer Lopez, Ryan Guzman, Kristin Chenoweth, John Corbett Directed by Rob Cohen (USA)

Now that JLo is 45 years old, her latest film character is in search of younger meat. Here she plays a school teacher and divorcee who indulges in a one-night stand with a hunky neighbour Noah (Guzman). Then, this being a thriller, Noah develops an unnatural obsession for her... Guzman incidentally is the hunk who showed his moves in *Step Up Revolution* and *Step Up All In*. Out 27 February



Shaun the Sheep Movie **CERT U** (85 mins)

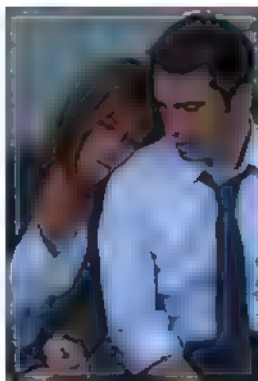
Directed by Richard Starzak and Mark Burton (UK/France)

Shaun, the sheep, first appeared in Aardman Animations' stop-motion Wallace and Gromit cartoons and then landed his own series on CBBC. Now he makes it to the big screen and leads his flock astray when he and his woolly cohorts end up in the Big City. Expect some gastric gas. Out 6 February

Cake **CERT 15** (102 mins)

Starring Jennifer Aniston, Adrianna Barraza, Felicity Huffman, William H. Macy, Anna Kendrick, Sam Worthington Directed by Daniel Barnz (USA)

Apparently Jennifer Aniston is astonishing even her fans with how good she is in this, for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe. She plays Claire Simmons, a woman who becomes obsessed with the suicide of a member of her 'chronic pain support group'. She then becomes involved with the husband of the deceased... Out 20 February



Project Almanac **CERT 12a** (106 mins)

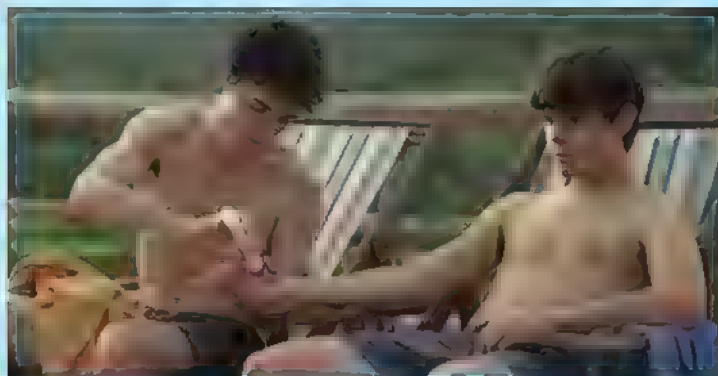
Starring Jonny Weston, Sofia Black D'Elia, Amy Landecker, Michelle DeFraites Directed by Dean Israelite (USA)

We're sorry to break the news, but this is yet another 'found-footage' sci-fi thriller. This time we have another group of teenagers who stumble across something they really shouldn't have. In this case it's the plans to build a time machine, so our intrepid heroes construct their own (easy, really, once you know how). Out 13 February



DVDs

The Way He Looks (12)



Leonardo and Giovana are best friends. Like all teenagers they yearn for more independence. Being blind, Leonardo even more so. They dream of going abroad and of experiencing love's first kiss. Gabriel, the new boy at school, becomes fast friends with them both – but

ultimately, three becomes a crowd. If love happens at first sight, who will Leonardo give his first kiss to? A universal story of first love that redefines the genre.

Out Monday 9 February

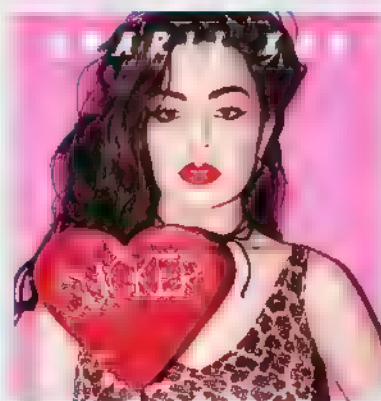
Global Warming (15)



Four short films, one heated experience! From Bollywood to Hollywood, these movies take viewers on a sexy journey around the globe. One is an East-meets-West, boy-meets-boy love story about a spicy tryst with a hotel clerk. Then a woman tries to reconcile with her gay father – but his half-naked male companions keep getting in the way. And an American on vacation meets two foreigners who keep him guessing. Finally, there's a naughty comedy about two straight actors rehearsing for a film's upcoming gay-sex scene. Seen at over 180 film festivals on six different continents, Global Warming has been called "relentlessly funny," "damn sexy," "hilarious" and "wonderful" by reviewers.

Out Monday 23 February

New Music

Sucker
Charli XCX

Sucker is the second major-label album from popular English singer-songwriter Charli XCX. It features hit single Boom Clap, Break The Rules and latest single, Doing It.

The Velvet Trail
Marc Almond

Soft Cell frontman Marc Almond is back with yet another solo album. Featuring songs about memories, nostalgia, childhood and death, it looks set to strike a chord with his legions of fans.

Non-Fiction
Ne-Yo

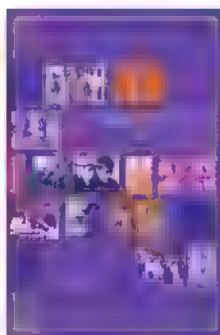
This is American singer-songwriter Ne-Yo's sixth album. Its lead single, Money Can't Buy, has already proved popular with his fans. An album full of future hits and favourite songs for those who love R'n'B.



...and something to read

Days Of Love
by Elisa Rolle

Chronicle 2,000 years of same-sex love stories from Alexander the Great to the latest Literary Award winner. Days Of Love lays to rest the well-established myth that LGBT couples aren't capable of sustaining life-long relationships. Packed full of photos and illustrations, it features the personal stories of 700 LGBT couples, from the dawn of history to the present day. Many of the contemporary couples share their stories on how they met and fell in love, as well as photos from when they married, or of the families they've started together.



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 Made possible thanks to Birmingham Pride Trust Fund

Staffordshire Buddies

Up to 10 hours per week
£10.05 per hour

Staffordshire Buddies are expanding their Health Improvement and HIV team and services throughout Staffordshire. We require seasonal outreach staff to work with communities, raise awareness and also support people living with HIV.

We are looking for seasonal workers in Stoke on Trent, North Staffordshire, East Staffordshire, Stafford and Cannock area.

We are also looking specifically for male outreach seasonal workers to work in dedicated male only spaces* (Equality Act 2010 Sc3 part7) throughout South Staffordshire

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 7th January 2015
Interviews will be held on: Monday 12th January 2015

Application packs are available
Telephone: 01782 201251
www.staffordshirebuddies.co.uk
Email: ask@staffordshirebuddies.co.uk


 Staffordshire Buddies
 Reg. Charity No: 1047235

Alcohol Support Group



Do you think you have a drink problem?
Have you recently had a drink problem?
Are you the partner or friend of someone with alcohol related issues?
Would you like support in dealing with the issues?

Birmingham LGBT Centre, 38/40 Holloway Circus, Birmingham. B1 1EQ
From 7.30pm - 9.00pm

You can email us at

Call us on

Or just Drop In



 birmingham lgbt

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE HAIR DOWN THERE?

There's often large debate in different corners of the gay community on what's right and what's not when it comes to how you treat your hair down there! We're not here to tell you what's right and what's wrong - but what we are going to tell you though, is should you decide to get rid of it all, just how to go about it safely...



'Pubic' what?!

If it's good enough for Cristiano Ronaldo, it's surely good enough for all of us. Pubic topiary - or the Boyzilian, as it's often referred to - is the male equivalent of the female 'Brazilian', and involves using wax or a sugaring treatment to get rid of all that unwanted hair around your genitalia and arse.

And you're telling me this because?...

Because you're a trendy, switched-on guy who's well aware that nobody's into big bushes nowadays. And then there's the hygiene aspect to consider, not to mention the fact that a hairless pubic area makes your penis look enormous (well, bigger anyway).

So what does it involve?

Pulling the skin taut and applying soft warm wax (or a sugar paste) to the hairs, after which the layer of wax or paste is ripped off taking the hairs with it. Luckily, there's a soothing post-waxing moisturiser which you can apply to stop you squeaking "Ow, my skin, my skin, it burns, oh God how it burns!" The whole procedure takes less than an hour from start to finish, meaning you can go out for your lunch break as hairy as a baboon and head back to work a seriously trendy guy about town.

Sounds painful, though...

No pain, no gain. Actually, it's not that bad and is probably far less painful than an axe through the head (we say probably, as nobody in the office has had the experience of an axe through the head, so what do we know?). A real benefit is that those who've tried it (the topiary, that is, not the axe) have said that it's never more painful than the first time. A bit like sex, then, really...

"A hairless pubic area makes your penis look enormous (well, bigger anyway)"

Pink Sou'westers LGBT social group to host gay-themed quiz night in Birmingham

LGBT social group Pink Sou'westers is holding its sixth annual Queer Quiz, in Birmingham's gay village, on Wednesday 4 February.

The Sou'westers say: 'Explore, expand or show off your knowledge of all things LGBT, from the past right up to the present, in this original LGBT-themed quiz.'

'As ever, there'll be something for everyone, so whether you're into popular culture and entertainment, music, art, sport, politics or the local gay scene, there'll be questions you can answer. And if you can't, your team mates might be able to. Some questions will be easy-peasy and some will need you to delve into the recesses of your memory, but what we can promise you is that you'll have an entertaining and informative night.'

'If you come on your own, we'll help you find team-mates or you can come as a team of four. If you're in an LGBT community group, why not get a team or teams to come along?'

'Brilliant value at just £3 per person, or £1.50 for people on a low income, we'll be dishing out both team and individual prizes.'

The 4 February event takes place at 7.30pm in the Penthouse Suite, upstairs from The Loft Lounge, in Birmingham's gay village. Everyone's welcome, regardless of age or area of residence.

Pioneering older LGBTs deserve better treatment, says patron of Midlands charity Peter Tatchell

The patron of LGBT Wolverhampton has lifted the lid on the 'double whammy' of old age plus homophobia.

Writing in The Guardian, LGBT rights campaigner Peter Tatchell said: "Old age is a challenge for everyone, but even more so for the estimated one million Britons over 55 who are lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB). They face the double whammy of old age plus homophobia."

Mr Tatchell continued, "Carers may eschew discrimination and pledge to treat everyone the same. But many older LGBs are not the same as everyone else and don't want to be treated the same. They want to be acknowledged as LGB people and have their special needs and interests addressed."

"As one care-home gay resident confided: 'The day outings organised for us are nice but I'd rather go to gay bars and events.'



'I still have sexual needs, which the staff do not accept. Another noted that his nursing home celebrates lots of annual events but never Gay Pride.' In conclusion, Mr Tatchell said: "The older LGB generation pioneered the freedoms and equalities we now enjoy. They deserve better."

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- Support for sero-discordant relationships
- Support and advice around your rights, discrimination or hate crime
- Twice monthly non-scene Gay & Bisexual Men's group
- UNIQUE - Young Persons (16-24 yrs) LGBTQ support

Contact us today to book an appointment or for more information.

Stamp it out! Nottingham women's football team in new bid to tackle homophobia

A splash of colour has been added to Midlands football matches as a Nottingham women's team backs a campaign to stamp out homophobia in the game.

The Nottingham Post reports 'Nottingham Forest Ladies players wore rainbow-coloured laces during their recent match with local rivals Derby County Ladies, and will continue to do so in future games.

'It's part of the Rainbow Laces initiative by the Stonewall charity to promote sport among the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community

The team also raised awareness of the University of Nottingham's Diversity in Sport programme

'Chairwoman PJ Andrews said: "It can take time to change people's mind-set on many things and for different reasons, for what you hope is for the better and greater good Nottingham Forest Ladies gifts football to so many and has done so over many, many years. Team sport brings about its own diversities and understandings and if we can continue to promote an equal and welcome environment in the club and on a wider scale

then we will do whatever we can to support that initiative."

The university presented 50 pairs of rainbow laces to the club, which plays at Basford United FC's ground in Greenwich Avenue, Basford

The players first wore them for the 2-2 draw against Derby on 14 December

'Equality and diversity events co-ordinator Claire Henson said: "NFLFC were a huge support to the University of Nottingham's 2014 Diversity in Sport events, so I was delighted to be able to present them with the laces as part of the 2015 event series. The university values inclusivity for all, and we're happy to support the Stonewall Rainbow Laces campaign."

'Footballers at Premier League clubs wore rainbow laces on their boots last September to promote the campaign, which Stonewall said received 320 million Twitter impressions Nottingham Women's Centre manager



Melanie Jeffs said "It's great to see Nottingham Forest Ladies getting behind the Rainbow Laces campaign.

"Although homophobia has perhaps been seen as more of an issue in men's football with awareness of women's football rising it's just as important to see women's clubs speaking out for equality and raising the profile of the women's game at the same time."

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HGL **NHS**

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- Counselling and one-to-one support
- Outreach on the scene
- Volunteering opportunities

TRADE

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Call 0115 741 7417 Trade Sexual Health, 32, Wellington Street, Leicester, LE1 6BH



ACE A Circle of Equality
Meets every Tuesday
5.30pm Tel: 01902
420404

ACTING OUT An acting
group for the LGBT
community open to
anyone. Contact:
actout@actoutgroup.co.uk
or visit www.actoutgroup.co.uk

ARTPROUD Art group
Contact: Peter Phillips
barnard.com

BARNARDS & BOOKS Reading
group. Every 1st Monday
Midland LGBT Centre
Bham
e.barnardhouse@hotmail.com

B650 Birmingham Gay
Synchronicity Orchestra
Contact: info@synorg.uk
or visit www.synorg.uk

**DUDLEY LIBRARY LGBT
READING GROUP**
1st Friday Of Every Month
Tel: 0121 654 0000

GAPP Gay and Performing
Punchy Birmingham
Call: Mike 0121 301 791

**LEICESTER POETRY OPEN
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Tuesday at The Red
Tent Tel: Bobba 01177
694881

**LEICESTERSHIRE RAINBOW
VOICES** LGBT choir. Meets
every Tuesday in Leicester
Call: Chris on 01160
850448

LGBT READING GROUP Every
3rd Wednesday monthly
7pm Tel: Jayne 01902
552060

JOURNEY FILM GROUP LGBT
Film group. Meets every 1st
& 3rd Tuesday monthly.
www.journeyfilmgroup.co.uk

RAINBOW SPIRIT Creative
activities for gay men. Call
John on 0116 411206

RAINBOW VOICES LGBT
choir. Call Carolyn 07825
641404 or Steve 01163
029940

SMETHWICK LIBRARY LGBT
Reading group. 1st
Monday monthly. 5.45pm
Tel: 0121 300 0447

UNTOLD STORIES LGBT
History project in
Leicestershire & Rutland
e.unfold@leicestershire.gov.uk

WALSALL LGBT BOOK CLUB
1st sat monthly. 11am
Walsall Central Library
Contact: Ruth 01922 603721



ALLIANCE Group for young
adults 18-25 LGBT
Centre Leicester. Call: Paul
Ficker 0116 247 7412

ANOTHER WAY LGBT Social
group. Meets in Walsall
every Saturday. 12-2pm.
Village Hall, Chadderton
Walsall Tel: 07475 942929

BROTHERHOOD Group for
anyone transitioning from
Female to Male (18+).
LGBT Centre Leicester
Call: Dennis 0116 204
7412

BSUM IN GROUP Meets on
the 2nd Tuesday of every

month at 7.30pm in the
Hill Group in Tel: 01532
300160

BRUM DINING OUT Meets at
a different restaurant each
month e.bumdinngout
@hotmail.com

COVENTRY LADS Social
group away from the
scene. Contact: 476 264292

DE MONTFORT LGBT SOCIETY
Based in Leicester
www.dmgslgbt.co.uk

DERBYSHIRE CC Employee
network. www.dshcc.org
or visit www.dshcc.org

DERBYSHIRE REACHOUT
Men's social group. Tel:
01332 21 704

DOSTI South Asian men's
group. Leicester. Call: 0116
204 1747

**DUDLEY GAY & BISEXUAL
MEN'S SOCIAL NON-SCENE
GROUP** 2nd sat monthly.
Free buffet lunch provided.
Call: Matt Barker 0121
430200

**THE EDWARD CARPENTER
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Call: 08703 215121
Birmingham contact: 0121
551 3161

EVERGREEN LGBT Social
group in Bham. Tel: 0121
412089

FAN LGBT Social Events
www.fanleicesters.co.uk

GAY CLASSIC CAR GROUP
Call: Simon on 0121 565
4166

GAYMEZ LGBT Games
Night in Wolverhampton
Tel: monthly. Tel: 01902
420920

GLoucestershire Gay &
Bisexual Community Social
group. Meets every 1st & 3rd
Saturdays. Centre 7.30. Tel:
01202 61213

HERFORD LGBT Gay Men's
group in The Health Centre,
Gael Street, Hereford.
No appointment necessary.

HIGH 5 GROUP Social
group for men attracted by
HIV in Leicester. Tel:
0116 204 1147

JME Group for BME LGBT
Leicester in Wolverhampton
every Sunday monthly. Tel:
01902 448002

LADS CAFE Shropshire
Tel: 01902 221410

LADS CAFE Weekly
meeting for gay &
Bisexual men in
Wolverhampton. Every
Monday 6.30pm. Tel: 01902
613000

LAVENDER MOVEMENT
Partners' flowers for air to
pills. Meet every Tuesday
e.lavendermovement.org
mail.com

LEICESTER GAY GROUP Call
Pete on 0116 291 6138

LEICESTER LGBT CENTRE
CAFE Leicester. Call: 0116
204 412

LGBT PARENTS Network for
LGBT parents
www.kidsworld.net

LGBT SHREWSBURY What's
happening in Shrewsbury.
lgbtshrewsbury.co.uk

MONTHLY Meets at 7.30pm in the
Hill Group in Tel: 01532
300160

NOTTINGHAM BREAKOUT
Meets every Tuesday from
7.30. Contact:
01159476868

NUBIAN RAINBOW
Leicestershire based LGBT
group in the community
West Midlands. Tel:
0121 446 1086

OUT EVERYWHERE Bringing
people together. Tel:
01902 400000

PINK SOUTHERN Social
group. Bham. LGBT group
offers non-scene social
events and activities. Call:
0121 204 1147

QUIZ NIGHT 1st Wednesday
monthly. Tel: 01902 420920

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Men's Social Non-Scene
Group. 2nd sat monthly.
Free buffet lunch provided.
Call: Matt Barker 0121
430200

SHREWSBURY CHILL OUT
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THEIR LIVES Call: 0121 446
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REMEMBERED** LGBT history
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LEICESTER LG&T CENTRE
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7412

LGBT WOLVERHAMPTON To
raise and bring to the
public the visibility of LGBT
community. Tel: 01902
420920

**WMX AND LGBT EMPLOYEES
NETWORK** Call: 0121
402111

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE City
Men's group. Call: 0182
425969

PINK SHIELD Working to
make coming out a safer
place for the LGBT com-
munity. Tel: 0121 602 0992

PRISM A forum for LGBT
people in Leicester. Call:
0116 204 412

RAINBOW HERITAGE
Network. Leicester. Call: 0115
848489

TRADE SEXUAL HEALTH
Holds events for
professionals and the
LGBT community. Tel:
0116 204 1147

EMBRACE Group for gay
and bi men in Coventry
aged over 50. Rainbows
Coventry. Call: James on
07824 448717 or Nichola
on 02476 231999

GREYFROE Leicester
based group aimed at
mature LGBT people. Call:
0116 204 7412

LADS LUNCH Monthly lunch
for male gay & bisexual
men in Wolverhampton
3rd Sat monthly 11am-2pm
Tel: 01902 425092

LGBT 50+ South Staffs
social group for people
50+ e.leicestershirelgbt.co.uk

MATURE GAY GROUP Meets
in Shrewsbury every
Friday 11am-1pm. Call:
Trevor on 07799 861640

MATURE GAY MEN For older
gay men. Call: Trevor on
01204 829040

OLDER LADS CAFE Weekly
group for mature over 40
gay and bisexual men in
Wolves. Every Monday 1-4pm
Tel: 01902 420920

OLDER LGBTQ Women's
network social group
Denny based. Call: 01799
300684

REBEL'S A mature lesbian &
bisexual women's group
Tel: 01902 420920

**STONE OLDER PERSONS
GROUP** social group for
mature LGBT. Tel: 01782
260998

**BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST
CENTRE** Meditation, Dharma
classes. Tel: 0121 449
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BIRMINGHAM LG&T M.
Contact: 0121 446 1086

CHANGING ATTITUDE
Contact: The Revd Chris
Coward on 0116 204 412

DERBY QUEST
Tel: 01302 511111

**JOURNEY METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCH**
Birmingham. Call: 0121
446 446 446

LEICESTER GAY CATHOLICS
A group for lesbian, gay,
bisexual and trans people
in Leicestershire. Tel:
0116 204 412

LESBIAN & GAY CHRISTIANS
Lesbian and gay Christian
movement. Tel: 0121 453
1111 or Tel: 0116 204 412

QUAKER Lesbian & Gay
Fellowship. Social and
supportive group. Founded
in Leicester. Tel: 0116 204
412

QUEST LINKAGE A national
network for lesbian, gay
& bisexual Christians.
Tel: 0800 808 008

RAINBOW MOOT LGBT
Parrams. At Parrams. Tel:
0116 204 412

**STAFFORDSHIRE LESBIAN
AND GAY CHRISTIANS**
Support group for lesbian
and gay Christians
e.leicestershirelgbt.co.uk

BIRMINGHAM BLAZE LGBT
Fellowship. Leicester. Tel:
0116 204 412

BIRMINGHAM BULLS LGBT
Fellowship. Rugby. Tel:
0121 622 3213

BOURNVILLE LADS HOCKEY
CLUB. Tel: 0121 622 3213

LEICESTER WILDE CATS Gay
& Lesbian Football Team
Call: Gareth 0116 204 412

LGBT Community Intro
For men. Wolverhampton
Tel: 01902 420920

LGBT TABLE TENNIS 1st
& 3rd Sat monthly. 7-9pm
Tel: 0121 643 0821

LGBT Zumba
Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902
420920

GAY OUTDOOR CLUB Walks
here a month on Sundays
Contact:
gocw@btinternet.co.uk

MIDLANDS OUT BADMINTON
Birmingham. Call: Andy on
02476 346141

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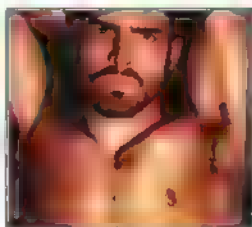
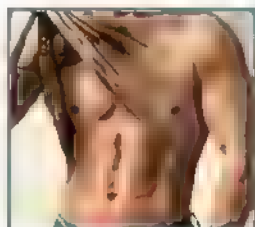
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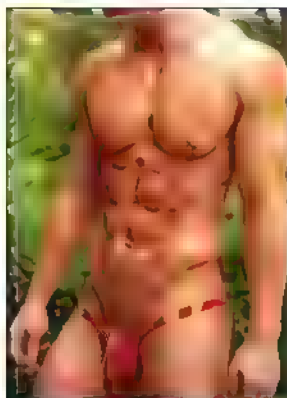
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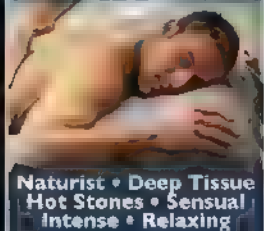
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THE GUDRUN LIMBRICK COLUMN

Being special

I used to be special. There was a time when gayness - or at least known-about gayness (what went on behind closed doors was, I'm quite sure, prolific) - was as rare as hen's teeth. Is it just me or is it now as big and showy as a great big gob of horse teeth?

The latest I've heard about is that Anna Richardson woman off the TV programme where fat people deny that they eat too much until they're shown videos of them eating a puff pastry pie filled with 53 chocolate eclairs. With syrup on it. How could you forget that? Is it really possible to live in such a state of denial? Can they actually remember anything about what's happened to them over the last few days unless a 'private detective/man being followed by a camera crew' follows them to the local chippy and asks colleagues how many sugars they have in their tea?

Anyway, I digress. The point is that Anna Richardson (the presenter of Secret Eaters), who oh-so-nicely points out that being fat is strongly linked to eating shit loads of burgers (who knew?!), has come out as being half of a gay couple. Really? Is everyone at it now?

Her other half, interestingly, is Sue Perkins - yes, the one who makes a living out of double entendres about cake on the Great British Bake-Off.

How does that even work? One sticks her face in pastry all day and

the other one rabbits on about, well, rabbit food.

The thing about this whole cake woman/anti-cake woman coupling is that nobody's batted an eyelid. Nobody. The tabloids have practically baked them a Congratulations cake.

What do we have to do to shock people these days?! What do I have to do to be special?

I'm rubbish at saving. If I have money, I spend it. And should I not have it, I do my damndest to spend that too. So it's always been a comfort to me to know that, should I hit hard times, I could sell my story to the tabloids. 'Woman admits lesbian love shock!' - that sort of thing. But no one's interested any more. My entire plan for my financial future is in tatters.

Mind you, the media does have a bit of an obsession with obese people at the moment - 'Woman's thighs weigh more than 12 men shock!'.

There's my new cash cow, right there. Someone pass me some cake.



Sue Perkins and Anna Richardson



ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Cucumber

Gay or straight, the television event of the year so far has got to be Cucumber (Channel 4), Banana (E4) and Tofu (online at 4oD). For those of you who haven't had chance to catch up, it's the three linked, multi-platform series inspired by the four levels of firmness of an erection - tofu, banana, peeled banana and cucumber. As writer Russell T Davies remarked: "Right there and then, I knew I had my drama."



Sixteen years after Davies' Queer As Folk dragged us down Canal Street, the gay scene - and the main characters - appear to have grown up disgracefully. Henry, brilliantly played by Vincent Franklin, is at the centre of Cucumber - 46 and bored with his job, his relationship and his life. Things go downhill when he goes on a date with partner Lance, who proposes. But Henry says no. When they go to a club, they pick up a young man who's off his head and take him home. But the night ends badly, with Henry calling the police on his own boyfriend, then storming off to pursue Dean, the pretty (though inappropriately young) boy from the office.

It's rude and funny and explicit. And if the first set of programmes is anything to go by, it's a fasci-

nating exploration of growing old, intergenerational relationships, new technology and how the gay scene - and being gay - has changed.

Some friends of mine have complained that it portrays a negative image of gay men as predatory, drug-fuelled, sex-obsessed characters who're not representative of gay men's lives. But that seems to miss the point. Cucumber is a drama. It's not meant to be real life. It's no more meant to be representative of the lives of gay men than Porridge is of prison life, or the Sound Of Music of life in a convent.

But it will make many of us laugh and - as the series progresses, I'm sure - cry as well.

I, for one, won't be making any other plans for Thursday evenings at 9pm.

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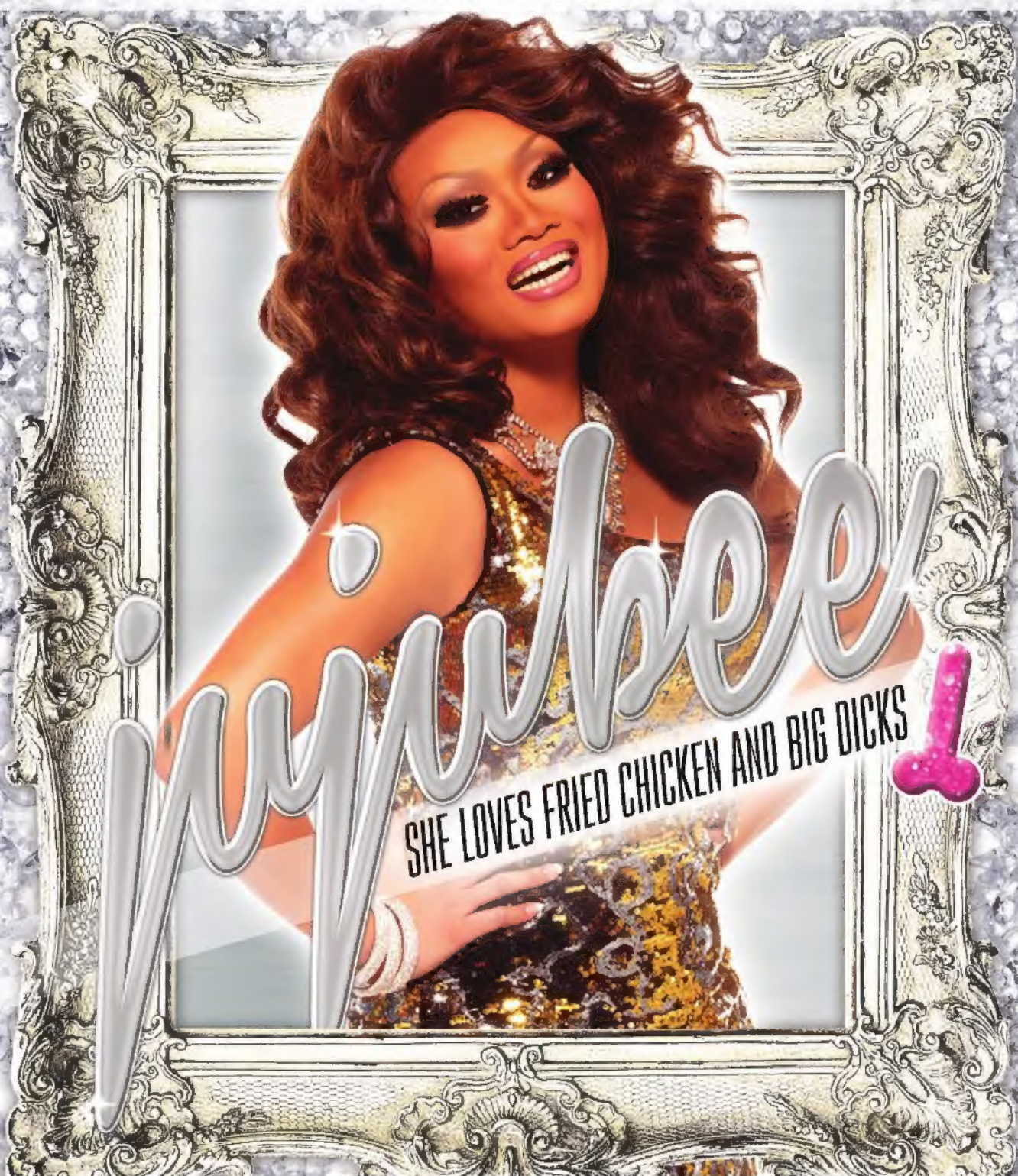
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